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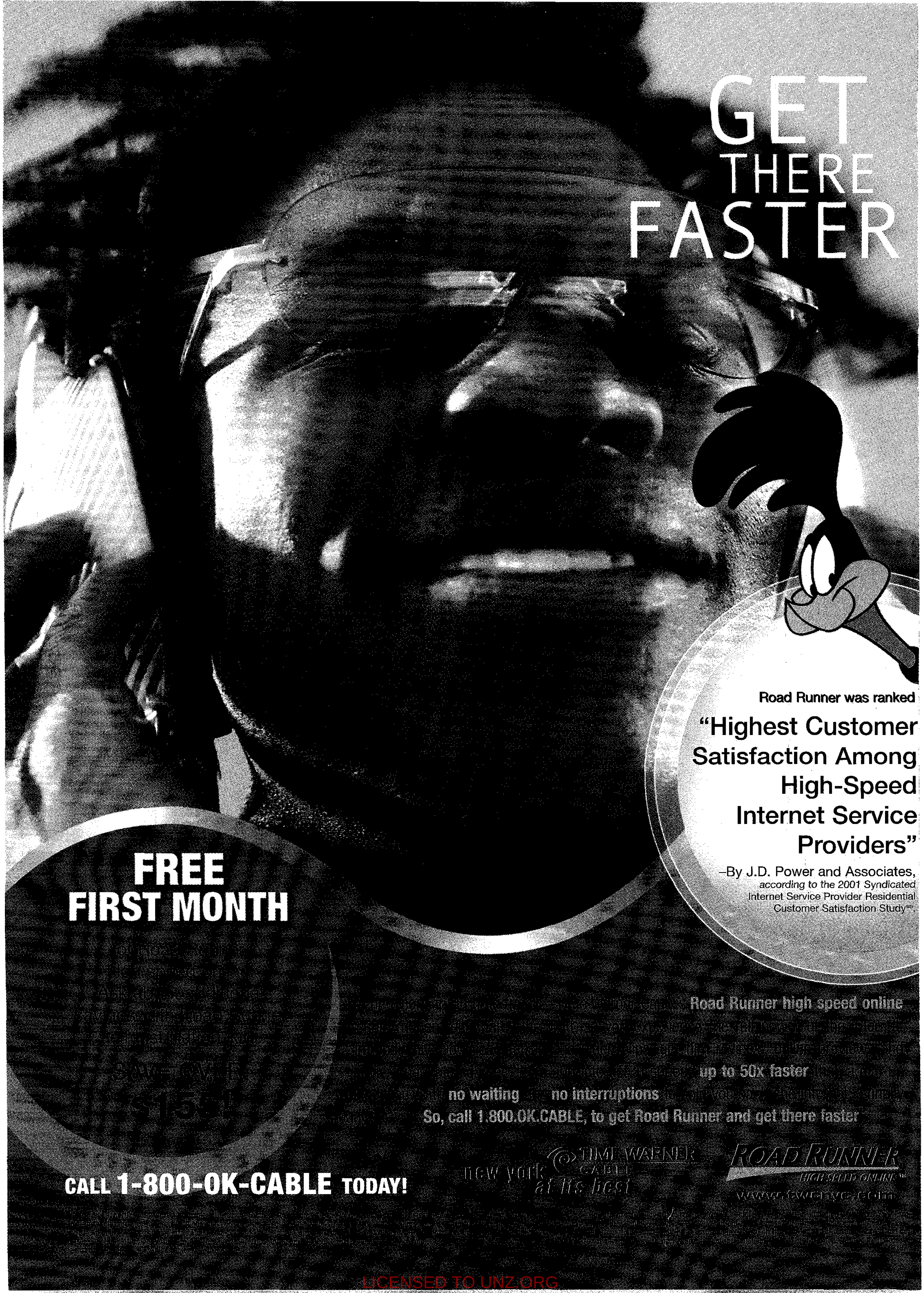

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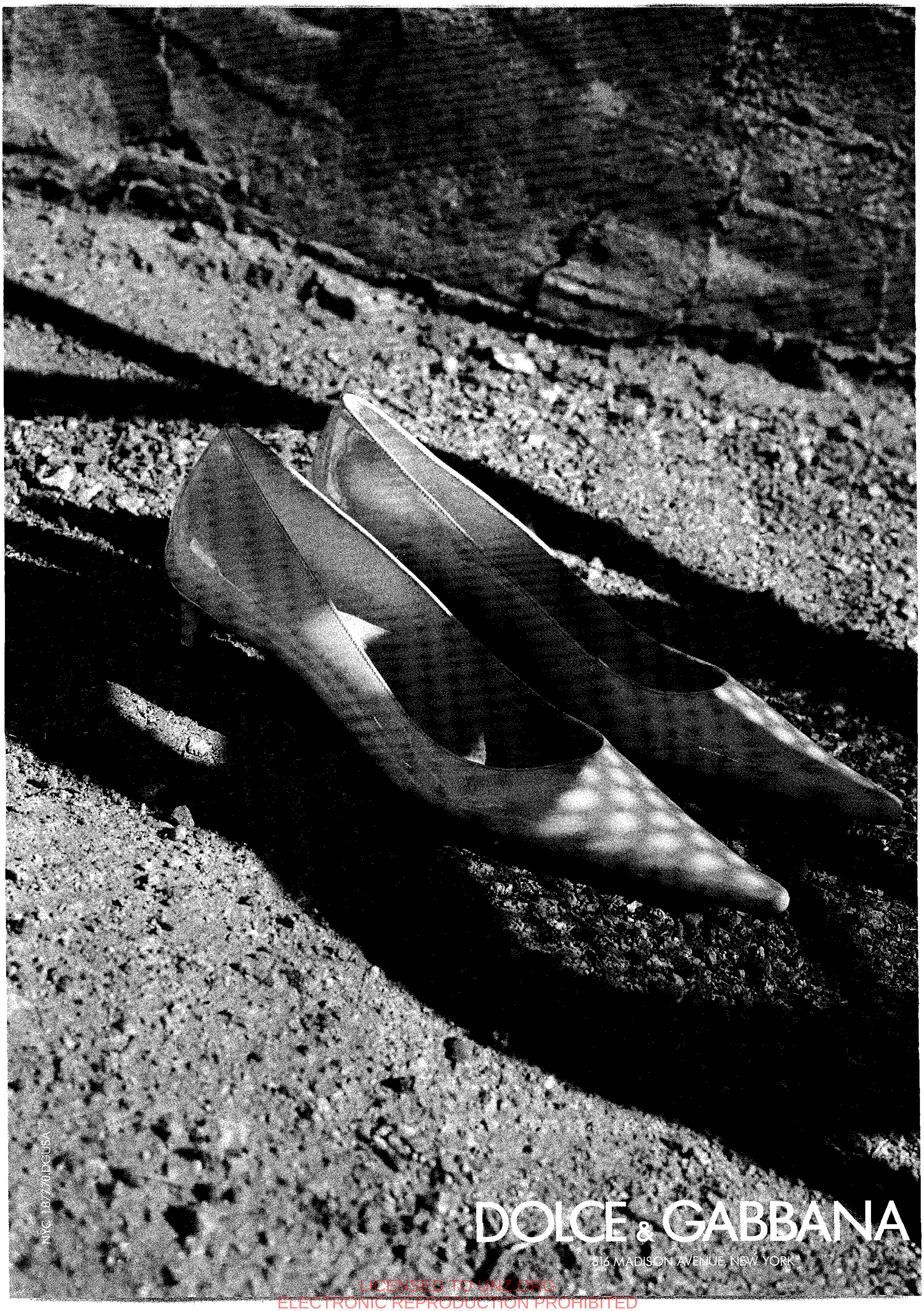
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2002

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26 **Let Him Off Downtown** By Jay Cheshes

Jimmy Rodriguez made the Bronx an A-list nightlife destination with his Jimmy's Bronx Cafe. Then he took on Harlem. Now he's opening a bar and restaurant in a neighborhood that's his idea of downtown—57th Street. It doesn't pay to underestimate Jimmy. But can he lure the mix of celebs, pols, and athletes who've kept his uptown clubs jumping to the sleepy East Side?

ON THE COVER: ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTOPH NIEMANN.

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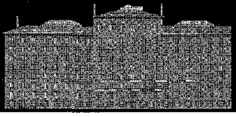

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Letters

> "As my twenty-fifth wedding anniversary is approaching, I can't help but think: Where is Giorgio when I need him?"
> —Carol Steinberg Weisman

Man About Gown

You can't imagine my delight in reading your article on Giorgio Sant'Angelo ["Wild Child," by David Colman, February 18]. In December 1978, Giorgio designed my wedding gown: a white lace bodysuit, white lace stockings, and a wrap skirt with three layers of lace and one layer of georgette. It was incredible! For the next ten years, Giorgio continued to make my clothes. The last dress he designed for me was the one I wore to my tenth wedding anniversary. I have kept every piece of clothing, as well as my collection of crystal earrings, that Giorgio designed; I can't part with any of it. Giorgio was truly a special human being. He made you feel like you were the only person in the room. You had his undivided attention, and the end result was that you felt absolutely gorgeous. As my twenty-fifth wedding anniversary is approaching, I can't help but think: Where is Giorgio when I need him?

Carol Steinberg Weisman, LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

I remember trying desperately to find a wedding dress in 1973 that fit my rich-hippie-girl aesthetic, not an easy task back then. My mom and I found the perfect white cotton-lace dress by Giorgio Sant'Angelo. It was nothing like the clothes he is now famous for, but it was a delicious confection and I loved wearing it. A few years ago, I was digging around at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Thrift Shop and happened across a wonderful stash of his stretchy travel pieces. I bought every single one. Thanks for telling his tale.

Leslie Gregg, SOUTHERN SHORES, N.C.

Landon Calling

I sure am glad to see one journalist come to the defense of Bob Rubin ["The Business Class: Cold Call," by Landon Thomas Jr., February 18]. You understand what others do not: Risk arbitrage is the art of keeping one foot over the line while never shifting your weight there. Some good men did prison time for doing their jobs well. Some bad men rose to power by doing their jobs better. Thank you for illuminating the difference.

Joseph Bradford, NEWBURGH, IND.

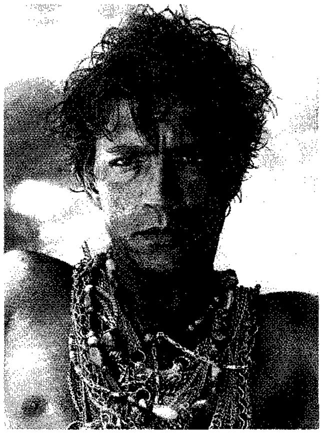
Blowing the surplus is what Rubin lectures Bush about? C'mon—there wouldn't have been a surplus without the Republican Congress passing the balanced-budget amendment. Clinton and his cronies raised taxes—remember?

Jimi Calhoun, BOCA RATON, FLA.

A Fan's Note

I have followed the career of Jennifer Connelly over the years, from her days in television in the early eighties to her big-screen work ["Mind Games," by George Kalogerakis, February 18]. Your article was inspiring in that it tells the story of someone who has never given up. Ms. Connelly's rise to the top serves as an empowering example of perseverance, talent, and patience for all those still struggling to achieve their goals in film or in other walks of life.

Tia C. Walker, MANHATTAN



GORGEOUS GIORGIO: Giorgio Sant'Angelo.

Generation Xclusion

While I enjoyed your "Singles" issue [February 11], I'm disappointed that you limited your research to people under 40. You totally excluded baby-boomers, a sizable number of whom are unmarried through either divorce, separation, death, or never having married. Our values, demographics, experiences, lifestyles, and survey results would probably be quite different. In a society where marketers focus so strongly on those aged 18 to 40, I'm not surprised that you bought into this mind-set.

Leon Mitrani, MANHATTAN

As a 36-year-old single man, I was somewhat surprised by the poll results for the question "Where do you go to meet your type?" ["Serious Fun," by Ariel Levy, February 11]. My friends and I rarely expect to meet Ms. Right at a bar or club, and yet those were both very high on the list. I suspect that the respondents consisted mostly of singles in their twenties.

Warren Ashenmil, MANHATTAN

Wingin' It

Regarding your lovely piece on the Victoria's Secret wings ["Gotham: A Side of Wings," by Amy Larocca, February 11], I feel that you did Martin Izquierdo and his talented staff an injustice by giving me sole credit for work that he and I do as a collaboration. The wings are designed by Martin and executed by me as well as other members of the staff. We work as a creative team and prefer to be viewed as such. We appreciate your recognition of the work we do. Thanks again.

Carrie Imberman, MANHATTAN

Editor's note: In the photo of Debra Winger on page 28 of the February 25 issue, Ms. Winger's tunic is by Luisa Beccaria. ■

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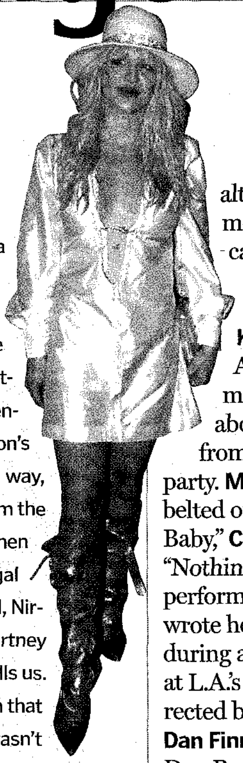
Intelligencer

By Marc S. Malkin

It's Curtains for Westbeth

After 25 years, the Westbeth Theatre Center is being forced out of its West Village home. The 18,000-square-foot theater on Bank Street is being booted by the landlord, the nonprofit Westbeth corporation, so the space can be rented at market value. According to producing director **Arnold Engelman**, the theater has tried to fight its eviction in court since its 24-year lease ended almost two years ago, but finally decided to accept a settlement for an undisclosed amount and pack its bags after it heard that the New School's Actors Studio wanted to take over the venue. "We knew that it was a battle that we could never win, especially with them looming in the background," says Engelman, who told us that the Westbeth staff will continue to produce shows for other venues from its new West 17th Street office. The theater's final show, British comedian **Bill Bailey**'s *Bewilderness*, closes on March 30.



Love Takes Wing

Courtney Love is learning how to control her anger—to a point. The grunge goddess was an unexpected guest at former hedge-fund manager **Boykin Curry**'s recent Moroccan-themed party, which included about 150 people lounging on pillows and smoking hookahs filled with fruit-flavored African tobacco in an apartment overlooking Central Park. While Love was talking politics with Washington's junior senator, Democrat **Maria Cantwell** (who, by the way, was dressed in a belly-dancer outfit), another woman from the Evergreen State joined their chat. Things got explosive when the woman started asking Love about her ongoing legal battle over the rights to the music of Love's late husband, Nirvana front man Kurt Cobain. "After a few minutes, Courtney jumped up and started screaming," a fellow partygoer tells us. "She started yelling, 'I better get out of here before I brain that bitch.' " Love stormed off toward the elevator. But she wasn't done—she grabbed a plate of chicken tagine for the ride down. Other party guests were shocked when the elevator doors opened in the lobby. One reports, "There's that bright elevator lighting and out walks Courtney with her makeup smeared and gnawing on a chicken bone."

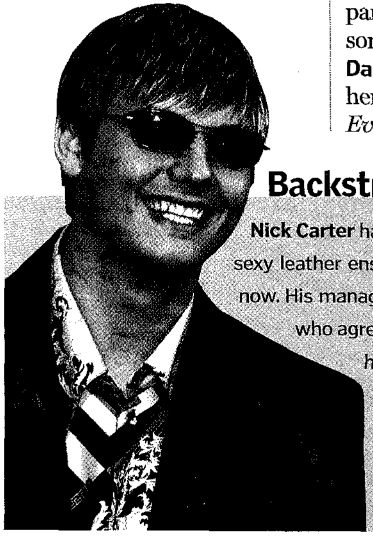
Times Website Picks Its Own *Trouble*

The folks at the New York *Times* Website get squeamish at the sight of blood. Execs at production company Lot 47 Films were ordered by nytimes.com's advertising department to remove a gruesome shot of actress **Béatrice Dalle** with blood splattered on her face from an ad for *Trouble Every Day*, a sex-and-gore-filled movie starring **Vincent Gallo** and Dalle. "That's what this movie is about," Lot 47's **Mark Lipsky** explained. "It's very bloody and violent in parts, but it's not gratuitous." (Two people fainted during its premiere at the Cannes film festival.) Interestingly, the *Times* had no problem with a section of the ad that showed a man mounting a woman in bed. This isn't the first run-in Lot 47 has had with nytimes.com. It was forced to alter an ad for last summer's *Happenstance* because the copy said SHIT . . . in French.

KATHY'S CLOWNS: Actress **Kathy Najimy** may want to think about releasing a CD from her 45th-birthday party. **Melissa Etheridge** belted out "Stay With Me Baby," **Camryn Manheim** sang "Nothing," and **Kirstie Alley** performed a tune Najimy wrote herself called "Upfront" during a staged performance at L.A.'s Club Lingerie directed by Najimy's husband, **Dan Finnerty**, front man of the Dan Band. **Cyndi Lauper** and **Alan Cumming** couldn't be there, but they sent a videotape of themselves running through the streets of New York singing "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun." To close the show, **RuPaul** (dressed as **Donna Summer**) performed "Last Dance," and **Ellen DeGeneres** led a conga line.

NO SEX AND THE CITY: Rumors of **John Corbett**'s latest romance have been greatly exaggerated. We've been inundated with calls from tipsters telling us the actor—who plays hunky Aiden Shaw on *Sex and the City*—has been dating **Jillian Demling**, the fetching entertainment editor of *Vogue*. Friends confirm that the two had their first date on February 13 after attending a meet-and-greet with **Enrique Iglesias** at the Hudson Hotel. However, Demling and Corbett's first date appears to have been their last. They haven't spoken since.

With Catherine Townsend and Aric Chen.



Backstreet Boy: Larger Than Life

Nick Carter has long been known to fans as the solitary Backstreet Boy who eschews sexy leather ensembles for long, paunch-hiding jackets, but that may change any day now. His management team has ordered him to shape up. The 22-year-old pop star—who agreed to enter a counseling program and perform community service after he clashed with a police officer in a Tampa nightclub in January—has recently started working out every day with **Ed Lovelace**, a former Olympic sprinter who owns New York's Body Phat fitness company. The grueling four-month regimen, modeled after Lovelace's NFL-training-camp workout, includes sprinting, weight training, and 5,000 ab crunches a day. Lovelace explained, "Nick is young, and he likes to party hard."

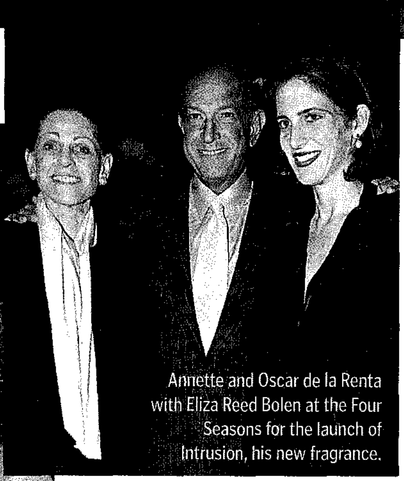
PHOTOGRAPHS: FROM TOP, PATRICK MCMULLAN; JEFFREY/WIREIMAGE.COM.

Scene

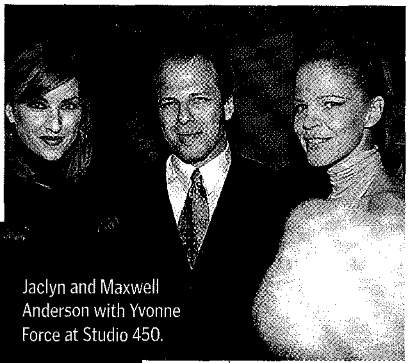
Caio Fonseca, Carolina Herrera, Anne Slater, and Martin Kunz at the New York Kunsthalle celebrating the launch of Chic, Herrera's new perfume.

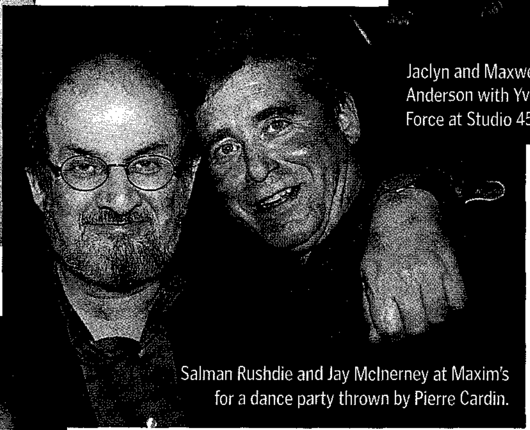
Toya, Romeo, and Fabolous at the Empire State Building for a party thrown by Z-100 and DKNY jeans.

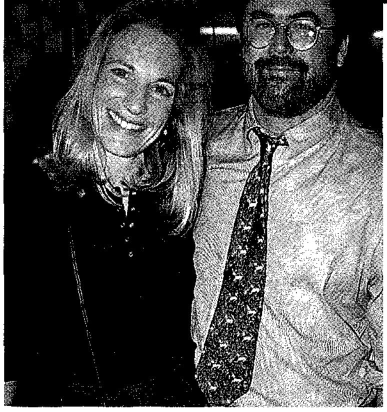
John Waters and Stephanie French at the opening-night preview of the Armory Show benefiting MOMA.

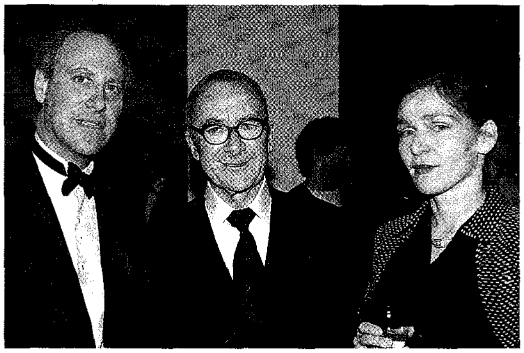

Annette and Oscar de la Renta with Eliza Reed Bolen at the Four Seasons for the launch of Intrusion, his new fragrance.

Bob Shaye and Amy Irving at a dinner in honor of *The Lord of the Rings.*


Jaclyn and Maxwell Anderson with Yvonne Force at Studio 450.


Salman Rushdie and Jay McInerney at Maxim's for a dance party thrown by Pierre Cardin.


Kathryn and Colin Harrison at the Housing Works bookstore.


Glenn Lowry with Gerhard Richter and his wife, Sabine Moritz, at MOMA celebrating the opening of "Gerhard Richter: 40 Years of Painting."

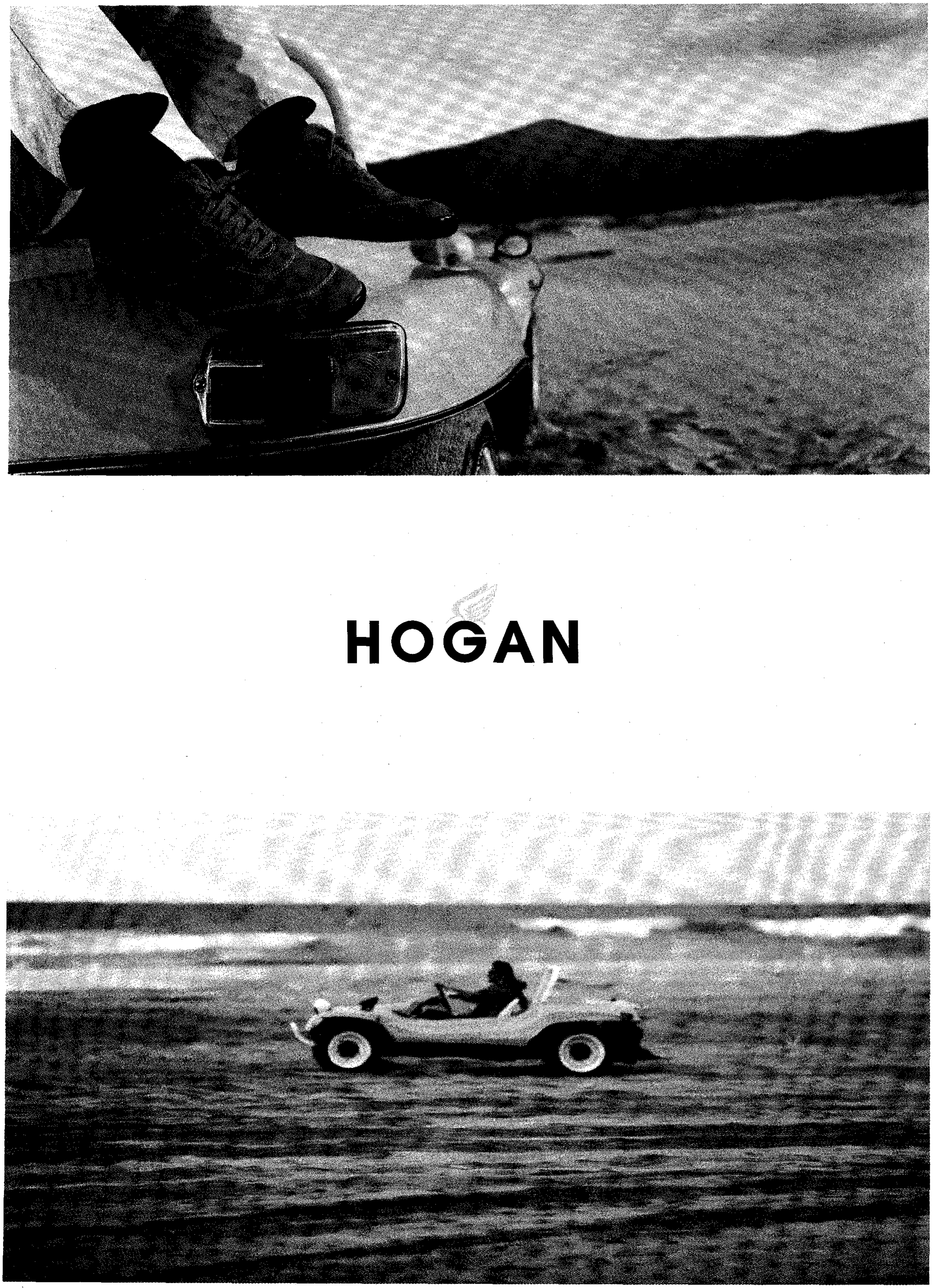
The Big 40

On February 23, Amnesty International celebrated its fortieth birthday at Studio 450 by inviting artists to contribute digital works to an online exhibition. The result: trendy scenesters like **Alexis Rockman** and **Tama Janowitz** mingling busily with humanitarian hard-cores like Amnesty chief **Bill Schulz**. "It's cool," said the artist **Leo Villareal**. "Amnesty's image has just been a bit . . . *intense.* Now, with us helping out, it's more open." Sufficiently open for **Jocelyne Wildenstein**, who looked in briefly. Was she, like, into Amnesty in high school? "Oh, I'm into *everything,*" she whispered. DAVID AMSDEN

Debt to Pleasure

Soon after **Gordon Lish** and **Amy Hempel** left **Vince** "Can't Live on $100,000 a Year" **Passaro**'s party at the Housing Works Used Book Cafe on February 26, the guest of honor offered a prayer for his new novel, *Violence, Nudity, Adult Content.* "Dear Lord, may this book—contrary to all expectations—make enormous sums of money." **Jonathan Dee, Thomas Beller, Kathryn** and **Colin Harrison,** and *Harper's* editor **Lewis Lapham** talked advances while **Bonnie Friedman** lamented the success of rival **Elizabeth Wurtzel:** "I need to become an addict—that would help." But with three kids in private school, Passaro took the cake. "If all these people gave me $10 instead of coming, it would've been a better night," he concluded. "Let us all call out like coyotes at the moon, 'Opraaah!' " JADA YUAN

Photographs by Patrick McMullan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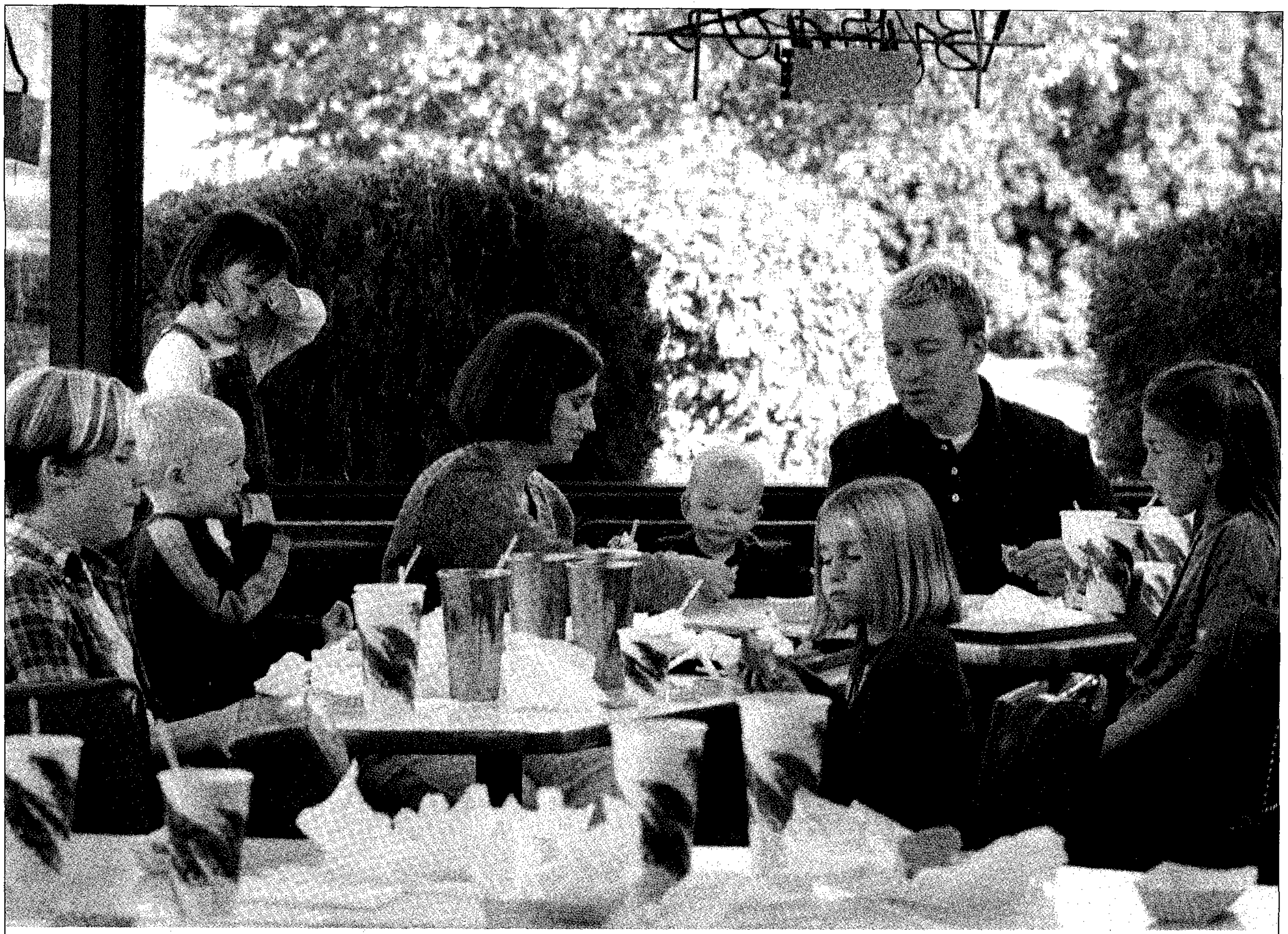

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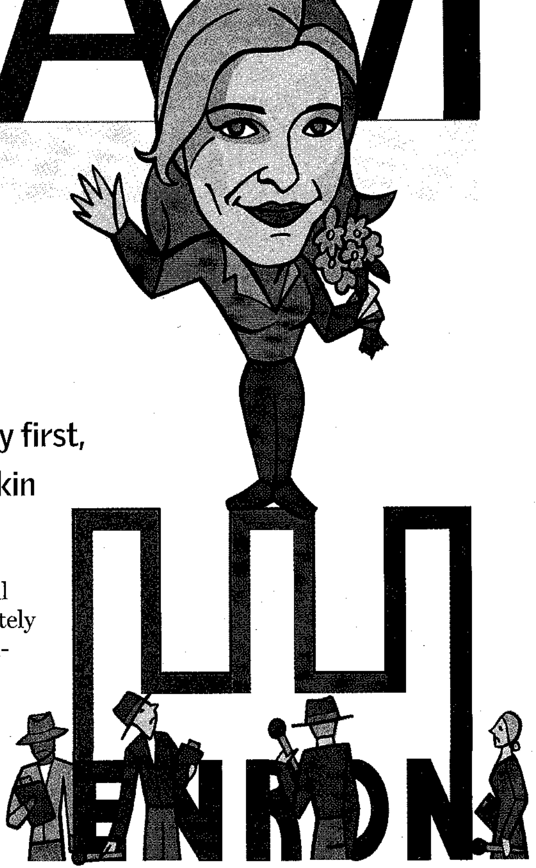
GOTHAM

Life in the New City



Enronathon

Young *Fortune* reporter Bethany McLean broke the Enron story first, right? Not so fast, says the *Wall Street Journal.* By Seth Mnookin

If journalism were in the Olympics, the Enron story might well be pairs figure skating. Bethany McLean, the young *Fortune* writer who first wrote about Enron's shady finances a year ago, has, of course, already been awarded the gold. And with that have come the requisite endorsements: In the past two months, she was hired as a consultant by NBC News and shared in a $1.4 million deal to co-author a book on the scandal.

But another team is also vying for top honors—amid complaints about shoddy judging. Reporters and editors at the *Wall Street Journal* believe their work has been unjustly ignored, with some wondering whether Pulitzer rivals like the Washington *Post* and the New York *Times* have gone out of their way to praise McLean.

"Enron did not collapse under its own weight," says Jonathan Friedland, the *Journal* editor who's been in charge of much of the paper's Enron coverage. "Without our reporting, I don't think any of this would have happened."

In response, McLean's former editor at *Fortune* and current Time Inc. editorial director John Huey says, "Bethany was the first journalist in a widely respected national publication to suggest that the emperor at Enron had no clothes." (Not that her own publication took much note: *Fortune* had to airbrush out Kenneth Lay from a November SMARTEST PEOPLE WE KNOW cover photo.)

Let's recap: In September 2000, Jonathan Weil wrote a long story for the now-defunct Texas edition of the *Journal* about odd accounting at various Texas-based energy traders; it included four paragraphs on Enron. James Chanos, a well-known short-seller who was one of the first to start unloading Enron stock, says he got interested in the company after reading Weil's piece.

Almost six months later, in March 2001, the then 30-year-old McLean (who *Times* columnist Maureen Dowd has suggested will be played by Alicia Silverstone in the inevitable movie) wrote her little-noticed 2,400-word story, "Is Enron Overpriced?"

Then, in October, the *Journal* ran a three-day series by Rebecca Smith and John Emshwiller detailing Enron's unorthodox partnerships. Their articles are seen by many on Wall Street as ultimately sinking the company.

Weil's partisans think he should get credit for crossing the finish line first (an item, "Credit Due," ran in "Page Six" recently). But even Chanos says that "Bethany's piece was the first one to raise really specific questions."

Most of the *Journal*'s brain trust, though, are plugging Smith and Emshwiller, who, of course, wrote their stories in 2001 and are thus eligible for this year's Pulitzers.

"The *Fortune* story basically said this is a company that nobody understands," says *Journal* deputy managing editor Daniel Hertzberg. "It didn't show what was wrong with the company. It took Becky and John to do that."

That's the competition. Now for the judging. In January, Howard Kurtz, the Washington *Post*'s media writer, highlighted McLean as the first journalist to ask questions about Enron. Ten days later, the *Times*' Felicity Barringer wrote her profile of "the financial reporter everyone loves to lionize."

While McLean was being anointed as a journalistic sex symbol in a story hitherto dominated by a balding Kenneth Lay, folks at the *Journal* felt they were being robbed: "People are trying to queer the [Pulitzer] pitch for the *Journal*," says one editor there. That's sour grapes, counters Kurtz: "In this case, a 31-year-old reporter beat them and the rest of the world by a considerable margin."

In a bit of circular logic endemic to media reporters, Kurtz adds, "I must have been onto something, since after my piece appeared, she was profiled in the *Times*, given a contract by NBC, and offered a book deal."

As for McLean, she seems slightly embarrassed by all the attention. "I've told people I've gotten too much credit," she says. "I did raise alarm bells, but I didn't know the half of it."

ILLUSTRATION BY JESSICA KASPER.

Black Hawk Frowns

Denouncing a hit movie in which you appear is a risky role for any actor—much less a young, aspiring one. Yet Danny Hoch and Brendan Sexton III have decided to go public with their political qualms about *Black Hawk Down:* “It wasn’t the greatest script I’d ever read—far from it,” said Sexton (*Boys Don’t Cry*) at an antiwar lecture at Columbia University on Saturday, February 23.

“It shows how powerful and not giving a fuck of humanity Hollywood is,” added Hoch (*Jails, Hospitals, & Hip-Hop*), “as if you didn’t already know.”

Hoch and Sexton insist they only agreed to play soldiers in the film (nominated for four Oscars, including Best Director for Ridley Scott) because the original script was boldly critical of America’s 1993 military engagement in Somalia. Extensive revisions began right after former U.S. Army Rangers were hired as advisers, the actors say.

“They were assholes,” said Sexton. “All they did was smoke cigars and criticize how we held our M-16s.”

“One of them bragged he’d killed over 60 people,” said Hoch.

And that was before Jesse Helms entered the picture. According to Hoch, after Army Humvees and other war matériel were shipped to Morocco (where much of the movie was shot), the Moroccan government became afraid the “military buildup” might offend its Arab allies, and filming was perilously close to being shut down.

“Jesse Helms saved the movie, is what I heard,” said Hoch. “Supposedly, Jerry”—Bruckheimer, the movie’s producer—“reminded Helms that he was spending a shitload of money with the Pentagon. Helms called the Pentagon, and the Pentagon called Morocco. Soon, we were back in business.”

A spokesperson for Bruckheimer—who is now working on a Pentagon-approved reality-TV series for ABC from Afghanistan—said that Helms was “extremely helpful,” but in negotiating with the State Department rather than the Pentagon.

As shooting continued, it was on a script that made the Somalis look, in the words of New York *Times* critic Elvis Mitchell, like “snarling dark-skinned beasts.” Hardly surprising, said Sexton, as there were no Somali advisers.

In the Q&A session at Columbia, however, some students had to wonder whether the actors might be protesting too much. (After all, they knew they weren’t signing on with Oliver Stone.) “You admit the movie is United States propaganda, but you’re still in it. How does that feel?” asked an intense young woman with tiny, wire-rimmed glasses.

After a long pause, Hoch answered: “It sucks.”

STEPHEN HENDERSON

Eating Green

Last week, the *Times* reported that six Barclays bankers in London had run up a $62,700 dinner tab (five got themselves fired in the process). We asked some of New York’s priciest restaurateurs, “What’s your most memorable bill?”

JESSE OXFELD

RESTAURANT	AMOUNT SPENT	MOST EXPENSIVE WINE ON MENU
Le Bernardin	$35,541 for ten “music people”	1988 Romanée-Conti, $4,000
March	$15,624 for three investment bankers, all men	1967 Château Pétrus, $3,200
Lutèce	$14,035 for six businessmen, “but I’m not allowed to tell you what kind of business”	1926 Château Mouton-Rothschild, $6,500
Le Cirque 2000	$41,500 (wine only) for six investment bankers, all men	1900 Château d’Yquem, $10,000
Atlas	$18,529 for six. “They’re appearing before Congress now.”	1945 Château Lafite-Rothschild, $3,500

Church Sale

A death in clubland is never proud: Moomba disappeared without a whimper, Twilo (right down to its sound system) was auctioned off on eBay, and the Palladium was turned into NYU dorms.

As for the Limelight, crestfallen clubbers flocked to an invite-only “Before the Wrecking Ball Sale” last week, where just about everything that wasn’t nailed down (and some things that were) could be had for the right price.

“It has been *very* weird,” said Brian Christopher Cummings, who was conducting the sale, as he stood in the Limelight’s chapel fielding inquiries about such items as a notice reading IT IS AGAINST THE LAW TO USE OR DISTRIBUTE ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES ($250) and the banner that hung outside ($3,000). “A couple came up to me and said, ‘We met by this sink. Can we buy it?’ ”

Some, like *Über*-flack Bobby Zarem, seemed mostly interested in reminiscing (though he did inquire about purchasing part of a bathroom stall). “I remember coming down the walkway with Bianca Jagger one night,” he said. “There were these great paintings and people posing as sculptures. It was just fantastic.”

Others, looking at the after-dark relics in the light of day, thought back to all their lost weekends: “Oh my god,” gasped one graying Chelsea boy as he flipped through the catalogue filled with shots of dazed and confused patrons like River Phoenix and Drew Barrymore, “I hope there’s not a picture of me in there.”

ETHAN BROWN

PHOTOGRAPHS: FROM LEFT, SIDNEY BALDWIN; MARK PETERSON/CORBIS SABA.

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EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ROSS KATZ ANNE CAREY TED HOPE BASED ON THE PLAY BY MOISÉS KAUFMAN AND THE MEMBERS OF TECTONIC THEATER PROJECT WRITTEN BY MOISÉS KAUFMAN AND THE MEMBERS OF TECTONIC THEATER PROJECT DIRECTED BY MOISÉS KAUFMAN

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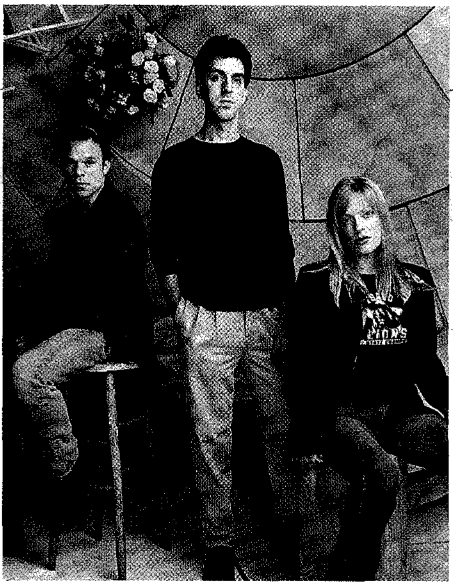
Take a Vow



After its opening last year in a Chicago suburb, Jason Robert Brown's funny, haunting chamber musical about a marriage gone sour moved *Time* magazine to name *The Last Five Years* one of the season's best shows.

It also moved Brown's ex-wife to have her lawyers inform Lincoln Center Theater, which was planning the New York premiere this spring, that she felt the show violated her separation agreement, in which Brown had promised not to call the musical a portrait of their relationship. The run was canceled, but in the ensuing months Brown rewrote one song, removed several identifying phrases, and made other changes—bringing us to the opening this week at the Minetta Lane Theatre amid rumors of peace between the litigants.

"I didn't want to write a show that made anyone feel uncomfortable," Brown says. "There's a perception that the new musical theater is this heady pursuit and that we're all icy intellectuals, when in truth none of us are. I did not pursue a career in academic composition. I wanted an emotional life—musical theater demands it."

No one is going to be lobbing ice cubes at *The Last Five Years*. In a season of big shows, *The Last Five Years* is intimate, not to say familiar: Jewish boy gets Gentile girl, he finds success before she does, things fall apart. Her songs begin at the end of the tale and work back (think *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Betrayal*), while his start at the very beginning and go from there (think everything else).

Such affecting emotionalism may shock. However warm and fuzzy they may think they are, the cadre of post-Sondheim theater composers that includes Brown, Adam Guettel, and Michael John LaChiusa often seem to be writing in, or for, an alternate universe. Their subjects are too dark, their tunes too unhummable, their art—well, you know: Their art isn't easy. And the mentor who led Brown to his Broadway debut and the 1999 Tony award for best score—before he'd hit 30—was Hal Prince, the director whose career has been entwined with Sondheim's forever. For all that, Brown's *Parade* left audiences—critics, anyway, since few ticket buyers followed—cold; the *Times* called it a "civics lesson."

The Last Five Years is no civics lesson. There are only two people onstage (Norbert Leo Butz and Sherie René Scott, pictured flanking Brown), but Daisy Prince—Hal's daughter and a gifted director who has staked her own reputation on Brown—makes their world a warmly realized and accessible one.

These days, Brown pointedly prefers the word *personal* to *autobiographical* when talking about *The Last Five Years*. "I make mistakes all the time, and I'm still overwhelmed by not being able to fix something that's the most important mistake of all," he says of his own past five years. "Emotionally, that's where a lot of the life of the piece comes from.

"I find the catharsis enjoyable," he adds. "As Jews go, I'm the kosher ham."

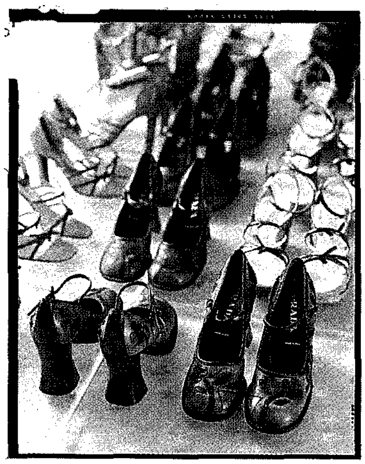
JEREMY GERARD

Style

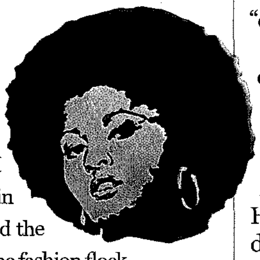
AMY LAROCCA

Prada Redux

The new Prada store on the corner of Broadway and Prince has already been touted as less retail outlet than museum of Koolhaasian architecture. But it's got another gallery-esque angle: a costume institute's worth of vintage Prada for sale. Not old leather bags from the pre-Miuccia, terminally unhip days, but greatest hits from collections as recent as 1995, revived for another consumer go-round. It's a means of demonstrating that trend-driving Prada clothing is, in fact, timeless. *Classic.* There are platform shoes and checked raincoats that were photographed to death in '92, for example, and they're not remainders either: Miuccia herself decides which pieces to resuscitate, and the factories produce limited runs. So if you're still upset that you missed your chance to buy a tippet, or simply can't believe that you once paid so much for a pair of shoes that were suddenly "out of season," take heart. And don't bother trekking to Woodbury Commons with your fingers crossed. Prepare to cough up retail for your second chance.



Frovival



"I was born in 1974," accessories designer Carol Muthiga says a little wistfully, "but I always wished that I was born in '64 so I could have experienced the style of the seventies." Clearly, the fashion flock has had plenty of reasons recently to mine thrift stores and mothballed closets for macramé and bell-bottoms. And now there's one more seventies trend to add to the mix: the Afro. Catherine Malandrino's models—black and white—took to the spring runway wearing 'fros of unimaginable circumference, and Muthiga's line, Kipepeo, is heavy on Afro iconography (brooch, pictured, $37 at girlshop.com) that pays homage to the great blaxploitation stars of the seventies. So even if you can't grow the 'fro, you can certainly accessorize with one. "Look," Muthiga says simply, "Pam Grier rocked. And you just don't get enough of those superhero women anymore."

PHOTOGRAPHS: FROM TOP, NICK RUECHEL; DASHA WRIGHT EWING (2).

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James J. Cramer THE BOTTOM LINE

You Talkin' to Me?

There are certain things you can say about Wall Street on talk radio that you still can't say on TV—that's why Opie and Anthony are about to face some stiff new competition.

IN TELEVISION, 40 PEOPLE BEHIND THE scenes make you look like a genius. There's a script. There's staff. There's a TelePrompTer. And if that's not enough, there's a little man talking in your earpiece telling you what to say, how to say it, and when to stop saying it. You only have to talk for a minute or two anyway before you go to tape or a commercial. Everybody thinks you know what you're talking about even if you are a total idiot.

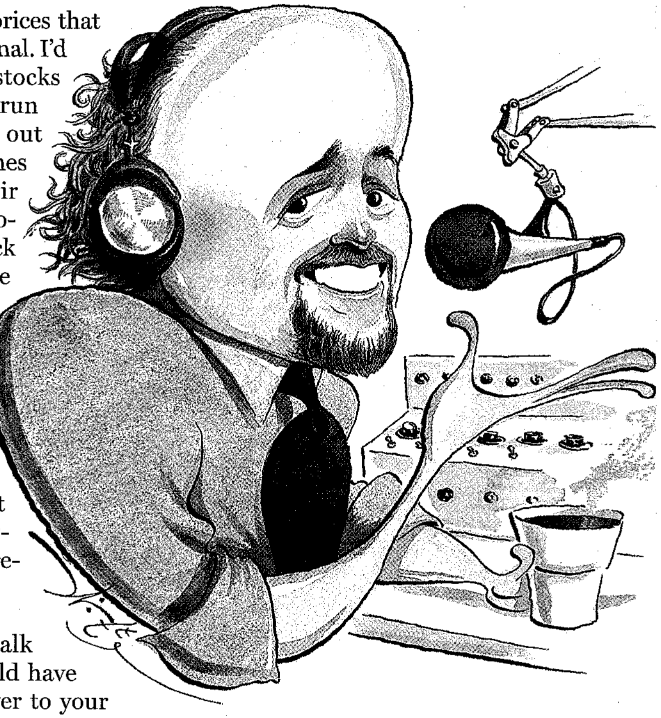
In radio, a man on the other side of a sheet of plate glass points to you, and that's it. You start talking. About what? About whatever comes into your head. And fourteen minutes later, you are still talking. No script. No handlers. No prompter. No man in your ear. Just you. A radio broadcast studio is at once the loneliest and the most creative glass box on earth.

I didn't know any of that last year when I took the job as host of "RealMoney," an hourlong financial-talk show (with the same name as the Website I write for). Over the past seven months, the show's been expanding around the country, and it finally debuted in New York last week. It's on WBBR, 1130 AM, weeknights at 11.

I had listened to plenty of talk radio growing up in Philadelphia, a town where radio hosts are bigger celebrities than their television counterparts. So I figured, *What the heck, what's so hard about talking? I've been doing it all my life.*

But when the twenty bars from my theme music, Steve Miller's "Take the Money and Run," ended and my producer brought his finger down, I found myself staring right into the microphone without a clue as to what to say.

So I just talked . . . talked like I was at my old trading desk at Cramer Berkowitz, where I had been a hedge-fund manager for fifteen years. At my trading turret, I used to call the market like John Madden, talking up the tape, that relentless cascade of stocks, volume, and prices that scrolled across my terminal. I'd castigate the crummy stocks and the bad guys that run them, while singing out hosannas for the hot ones and the CEOs and their analyst acolytes who propelled them higher. Back then, I used to drive everyone nuts with my endless description of the action. Having some nut chattering endlessly in the background is not a conducive environment for reading a balance sheet or monitoring a conference call. But I couldn't resist. I *love* to talk stocks. Even when no one was in the room, I would talk stocks to myself. I would have been happy to come over to your house and talk stocks just to you!



That's why the "RealMoney" radio show turns out to be the most enjoyable challenge I have had since I started running other people's money 21 years ago. That's why, after the first fourteen minutes of nonstop monologue, I have to fight myself to take calls. Who wants to share the mike with someone else—"Jenny, who wants to know how to invest a $400,000 inheritance," or John, who wants to know whom he can trust after Enron?

But I do it, because, for once, after being a carping, "cranky" money manager, as the New York *Post* described me recently, I can't believe how amazing a call-in show can be, where it can take you, and where, if you are willing, you can go when pressed by real people who are fed up and angry about losing money in a stock market that was once paved with daily highs and spectacular returns.

And I love every second of the 42 minutes a day that I'm on the air. After seven months facing that mike, I feel like a vet. I no longer tremble when Dave Gorab, my fabulous producer, gives me the high sign. And I'm getting used to those talk-radio catchphrases: "Longtime listener, first-time caller," and "I can't believe I got through." But I don't think I can ever get used to the losses that people have taken in this market. When you are managing the money of the superrich, you don't get many chances to speak to the people who have borne the brunt of this terrible two-year-old bear market in tech, not to mention the low or stagnant returns (at best) in

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other sectors. You don't know the anger and hatred that people have toward the managers at Janus or Putnam or Invesco, despite the hundreds of millions those folks have spent trying to keep you in their mutual-fund chains. You can only guess at how much people now feel the market is rigged, what with their 401(k)'s decimated while Ken Lay's wife pleads poverty because they have to sell a few of their many multi-million-dollar homes to finance some legal bills.

For me, these daily exchanges with the real owners of stocks are like pure oxygen—I can't believe how personal it all is, especially after the solitude of the printed word and the forced statesmanship and good manners demanded of all of us who go on television.

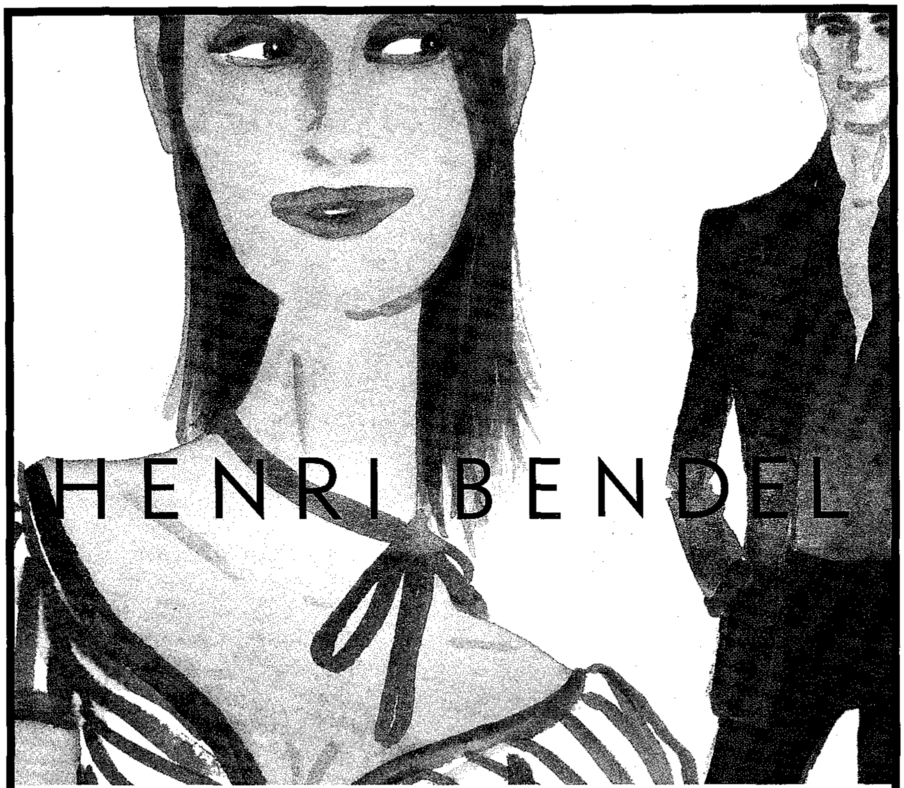
My deal with the show's producers is simple: I can say what I want as long as I know it to be true. Which means that I can get people out of all of those crummy investments they've been jammed into and tortured with, and put them into something solid, or at least less dangerous to their financial health. At first, I thought it was only a matter of time before my willingness to castigate lousy companies and their stocks got me in hot water with the radio powers that be. I am no stranger to that on television, where I had at one time or another been warned about not badmouthing companies that I knew were hopeless money traps.

But not in radio. In radio, you are freer to say what's on your mind than on TV. It's more direct, less muted. I've received only encouragement from the honchos for blasting those who don't deserve trust and praising those who can make you money. Stuff like "The Danger Zone," a segment where I actually tell you what stocks to *sell*—something you rarely hear on Wall Street—wouldn't last a minute on television, or even cable.

So how long will the show last? Alas, radio, like television, is a ratings game. If no one tunes in, they pull the plug and I'm back calling the game to myself, alone in my office.

Right now, though, I'm "between books," meaning I am just now going into my first full ratings season. I feel it's up to me. If I can make this money game as interesting as Mike and the Mad Dog or Jim Rome can make sports, if I can get people laughing or angry about stocks like Howard or Rush, I may have found my next career. ■

James J. Cramer is co-founder of TheStreet.com. He often buys and sells securities that are the subject of his columns and articles, both before and after they are published, and the positions that he takes may change at any time. *e-mail: jjcletters@thestreet.com*



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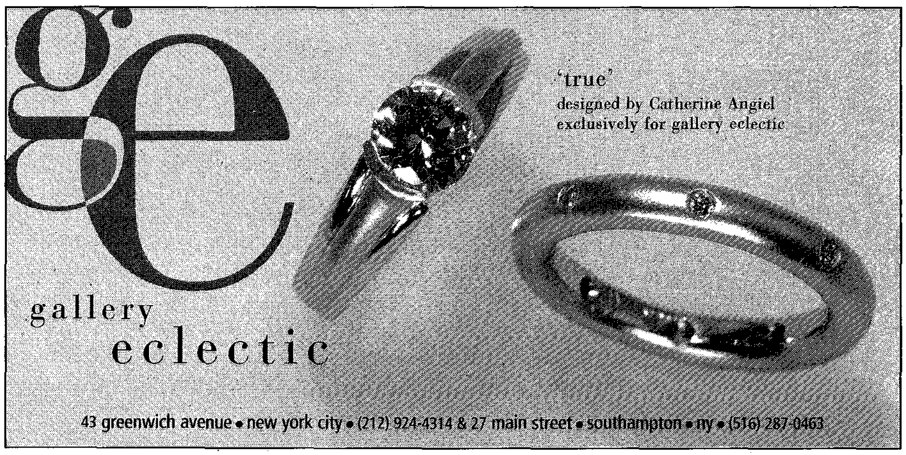

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Michael Wolff THIS MEDIA LIFE

My Dinner With Rupert

In an unlikely turn of events—and thanks to some shameless maneuvering to achieve (and protect) proximity—our Murdoch-deconstructing media columnist breaks bread with the man himself.

PAM ALEXANDER, THE FAMOUS TECHNOLOGY-business P.R. woman, is very tall. As soon as I asked her to go for a drink, she began looking over my head with her eagle eyes for someone else to add to the party. Why socialize with one person when you can do a multiple schmooze? Having a drink is a scalable pursuit.

We were, possibly for the last time, in Monterey, California, at TED, the twelfth annual symposium on technology, entertainment, and design (the stage is alternately occupied by philosophers and juggling acts), run by impresario Richard Saul Wurman.

I was really proposing a nostalgic drink. As everything else had passed in the technology business, now TED was likely passing, too. At the height of the boom, Wurman, as crafty as anyone, had made a deal to sell his conference—this was his last year. The TED bond (a TED friend is like a summer-camp pal: I had had lunch earlier in the day at a table with Naomi Judd—so now Naomi and I are bonded) might well break.

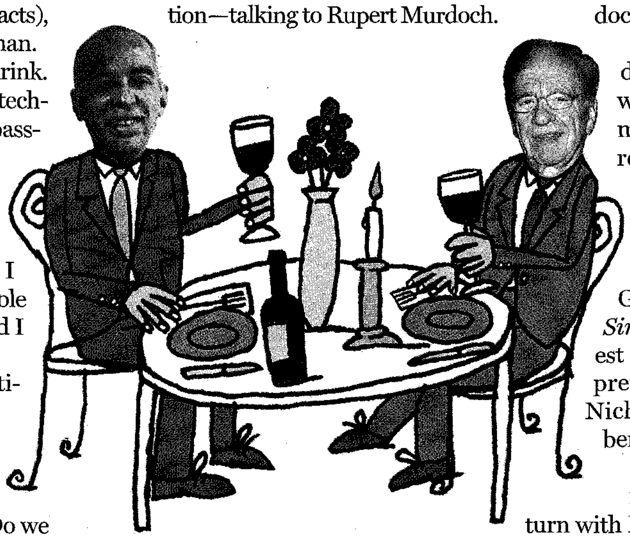
But Pam is not that much of a sentimentalist.

"Who else can we get?" she wondered aloud, scanning the clusters of people in the lounge area outside the conference-center auditorium. "Do we want Kurt?" she asked, or rather calculated. Kurt Andersen, the writer and occasional media entrepreneur, was sitting in a comfortable chair (one of the sessions this year was on the design of the chair), watching on a monitor the session in progress. The session, a dull one, was about the design of the Airstream trailer. "Go ask him," Pam instructed. "I'll be back. Just stay with Kurt, don't leave."

"My family had one of those," Kurt said about the Airstream trailer on view on the flat-screen. I had a brief and affectionate picture of Kurt, a chilly ironist and world-weary mediaist, as a sunny fifties kid.

Kurt and I watched Pam move through the room, aware that she could as easily drop us; the bubble may have burst, but the impulse to network continued. She could trade up, we knew (for Deepak Chopra, possibly, or Jeff Bezos or Jeffrey Katzenberg or Yo-Yo Ma).

Indeed, suddenly, in a turnaround athletic in its speed and grace, Pam went from talking to the middlers (people she might invite for a drink, but only if there was no one better to invite) to, somehow—and I didn't catch the exact microsecond of the transition—talking to Rupert Murdoch.



Proximity is the drug. The closer you are, the higher you feel. We proximity crackheads have a biological response to who we want to be closest to. This year, at TED, it was Murdoch.

It was not just that Murdoch was the biggest mogul at the conference. There was this other thing: Part of the TED mystique was having unlikely people in the mix (e.g., Naomi Judd; a few years ago, there was Courtney Love). Murdoch represented no small challenge to the liberal sensibility here (Richard Dawkins, the biologist, lectured the conference on the importance of atheism), but now here he was, in the fold.

I FELT A SHORT BLUSH OF BASHFULNESS—even though, it seemed to me, I might be responsible for Murdoch's being here.

After last year's TED, I had introduced myself to Murdoch at another conference, and after I'd awkwardly talked to him for a few minutes about conferences themselves ("Do you come to many conferences?" I believe I had asked as a pathetic conversation gambit), Murdoch had expressed polite interest in TED. I'd relayed this interest to Wurman, who had then besieged Murdoch for the better part of the year.

In fact, Murdoch, earlier in the day, had been at my lunch table, with Naomi Judd (James Truman, the Condé Nast editorial director, had been right next to Judd. "What am I going to talk about with her?" James had asked me; eavesdropping later, I heard them talking about God) and Matt Groening (*The Simpsons* are perhaps Fox's greatest single asset, but Groening was pretty grumpy about Fox) and Nicholas Negroponte (who was bending Rupert's ear about computer networking). But I demurred, rather than grab my turn with Rupert.

In the past year, I had written many unkind things about him, all of which I found myself helplessly regretting now. Had he read them? Did he remember them? Would he hold them against me? (Indeed, at the lunch table, I'd been seated awkwardly between Louis Rossetto and Jane Metcalfe, the founders of *Wired*, who hadn't spoken to me since I'd written unkind things about them several years ago.)

But now, as Kurt and I moved tentatively toward where Pam had buttonholed him, Murdoch seemed not only unaccompanied but alone. He had no handlers or retinue. He was clutching his bag of conference swag, including a Tellme Net-

PHOTOGRAPHS: FROM LEFT, JASON TANAKA BLANEY; GLOBE PHOTOS. ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT MENCHIN.

works teddy bear ("Revolutionizing how people and businesses use the phone"), which he didn't seem to want to let go of (after all, he has a new daughter). His face was wrinkled and expressive (definitely no work done on this face). I realized he looked like my grandfather—I could have hugged him.

And finally, there was the competitive thing—someone else would surely talk to him if I didn't.

Pam, I thought, was unsure how far she could go with him, and seemed almost about to disengage. I caught her eye and made appropriate semi-frantic gestures, and suddenly Pam took action: "Rupert," she said, trying out his name, "we're going for a drink"—she maneuvered around him (Pam was much taller than Murdoch too; we were, I realized, Rupert and I, the same size)—"Why don't you come with us?" He wanted, I thought, to be taken in tow.

AND SO SUDDENLY WE WERE WALKING ALONG outside the conference center, making conversation with the evil emperor himself. Not only that but trying to cordon him off, physically close out any other greedy conferees from getting a piece of our kill. Kurt was on one side, I was on the other, Pam was riding shotgun. It felt, in a small but satisfying way, as though we'd kidnapped him.

We were, however, very respectful kidnappers. We were giddy with respectfulness. We were the sycophants; he was the sage. He was Yoda. It was very Zennish. We were fast approaching a higher plane of understanding—after all, Murdoch had created, at least, the media universe.

There was the sense that any question would be answered—all you had to do was think to ask it. The man with all the answers was here, entirely accessible. And amiable. A mensch, it turned out.

He talked not just without airs but without filters. There was the sense that what he was saying to Kurt and to Pam and to me was what he would say to Peter Chernin, the COO of News Corp.—or to any waiter who asked.

The man, it was clear, just likes to talk. He likes to talk—pretty much nonstop—about business (one of the reasons, I don't doubt, that he's on his third marriage).

He didn't think, he said, that the caps on cross-media ownership that the courts had just removed would result in mad buying of television stations. They were good cash-flow producers, but on the other hand they were, he said, a pain to run—the smaller the station, the bigger the pain. (Of course, Rupert, the nation's largest station owner, was probably not going to advertise his intention to scoop

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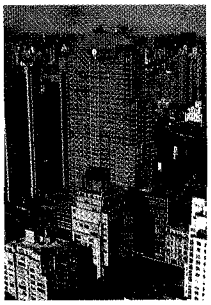

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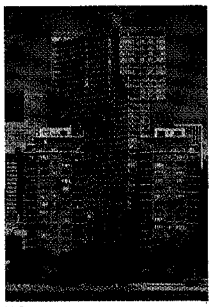

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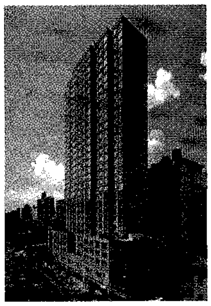

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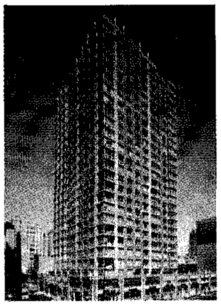

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up new ones.) He went on about the DirecTV deal. He seemed wounded but stoic about losing the deal to EchoStar. He told the story—with a good sense of frustration and irritation—of the series of ultimatums and extensions in the negotiations and how finally, after one last extension, he'd walked away from the deal he'd worked on for two years and, in a sense, bet his company on. (I felt tested: Would I have walked away?) Then he told the story of selling the Fox Family Channel to Disney—of running into Michael Eisner at Herb Allen's Sun Valley conference and of how much Michael wanted to do a deal. Apparently any deal.

We wandered into an open bar at a nearby restaurant where one of the TED dinners was to be held that night—but there was no bartender. Still talking about the Disney deal, rehashing the billions he'd gotten, Rupert slipped behind the bar and started to open the wine. "I had to let Peter [Chernin] do the deal," he said, "because I couldn't keep a straight face."

Then a *Forbes* reporter, a voluble young man, forcibly interposed himself between Murdoch and Kurt and me. We gave him ground because he seemed to be willing to ask the ruder questions.

"You just said you're too small," the *Forbes* guy said, grabbing onto Murdoch's passing analysis about who might buy Disney. "Are you saying it's over for News Corp.?"

"We're fine," said Rupert, with a shrug that may or may not have been meaningful. (He was so expressive and so unguarded that you began to read nuance and ambivalence into all his gestures.)

Then the *Forbes* reporter began telling Murdoch what he thought Murdoch should be doing (Rupert listened with great patience, it seemed to me). "Do something," I beseeched Pam, who cut in on the *Forbes* guy, steering him off.

Rupert kept talking. He grew more expansive, more conspiratorial, even (although it did seem like he'd conspire with anyone), his commentary more intimate. We proposed that he come with us to the dinner we were scheduled to go to—John Brockman's Billionaire's dinner, a TED ritual.

Was he dressed all right, he wanted to know—his shirt, he said, was $11 from Wal-Mart.

"It was very Zennish. We were fast approaching a higher plane of understanding—**after all, Murdoch had created, at least, the media universe."**

"DON'T GO ANYWHERE," RUPERT SAID WHEN we arrived, "I just have to pee."

I had to pee, too, but there was a moment of shifting and reformatting around the tables in the restaurant, and I didn't want to give any ground. Pam shooed away some interlopers and Kurt anchored an area of seats. Then, when Rupert returned from the men's room, Pam moved him into a captive position against the wall. Geri Laybourne from the Oxygen Network held him on one side; Walt Mossberg, the *Wall Street Journal* columnist, was on the other. I was across from him and Kurt was next to me. Only Pam, in some extraordinary act of selflessness, moved out of direct contact (she did ask me a few times later in the evening if I would switch seats with her, but I wouldn't budge).

Mossberg lectured Rupert about a new sort of viral connectivity (it was the same lecture Rupert had gotten from Negroponte at lunch). And Rupert listened patiently ("I'm interested in this," he kept saying, although, probably, not very). I talked to him about kids' schools. My daughters go where one of his daughters had gone.

There is, of course, however passing, the moment when you wonder about having taken the proximity drug. *How could I? Why did I do it? What damage would it do?* But that is, in a second, swept away. You're high, after all.

You surrender.

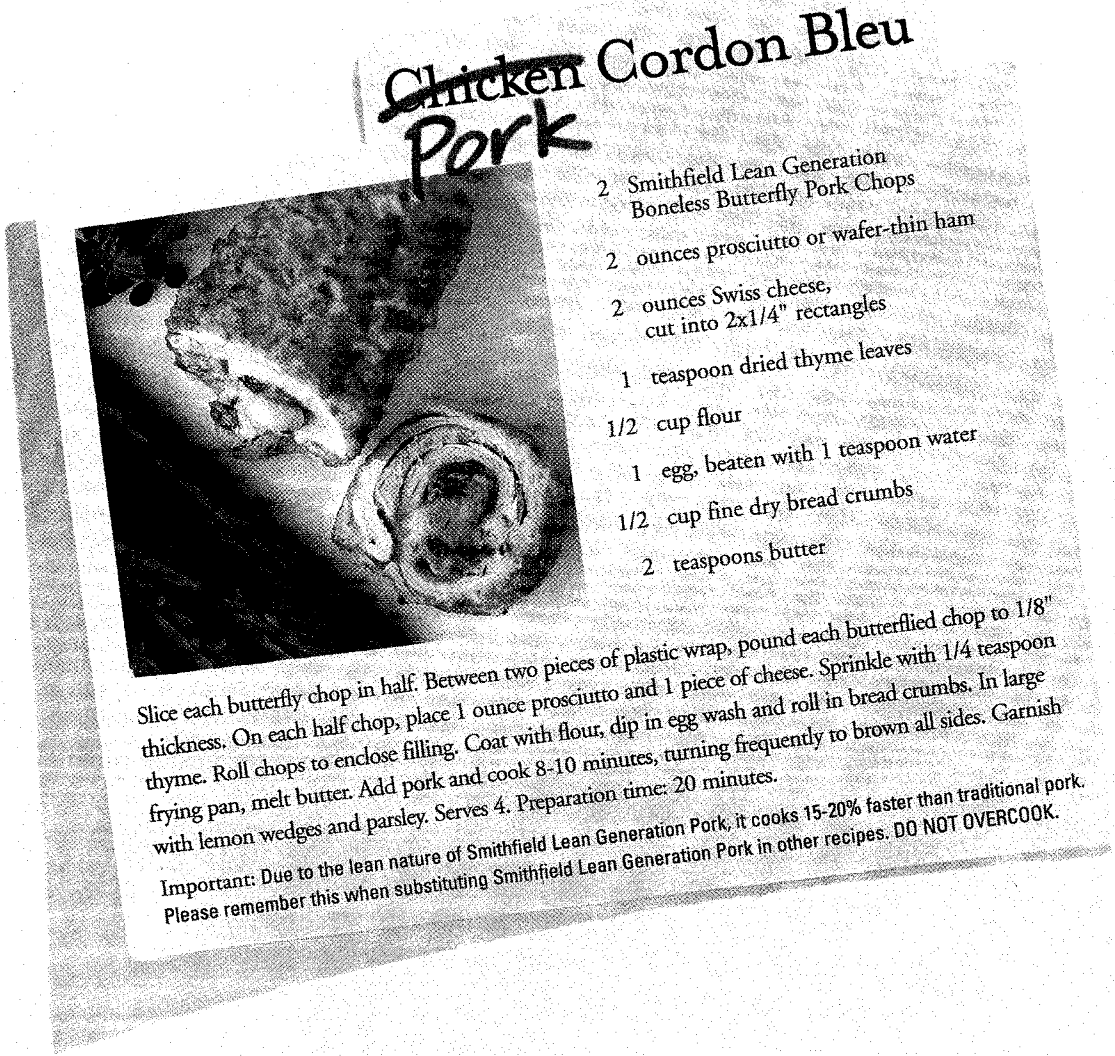
It didn't seem like there was anything Rupert was holding back on. Offer him a name, and he'd give you the skinny. "What about Sumner?" "What about Messier?" At one point, Geri Laybourne was surprised enough at the Murdoch openness to ask him about that.

"I am," said the mogul, obviously enjoying himself, "as big a gossip as anyone—bigger."

Indeed, I could tell you many things about what Rupert told me about his fellow moguls (although, when high on proximity, you don't necessarily remember things too well), and about the ins and outs of media past and the media to come, but proximity and all its allures prevents me from dishing to just anyone. ■

E-mail: michael@burnrate.com. Visit Michael Wolff's archive at newyorkmetro.com/archive/wolff.

How to improve your favorite chicken recipe.



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- 1/2 cup fine dry bread crumbs
- 2 teaspoons butter

Slice each butterfly chop in half. Between two pieces of plastic wrap, pound each butterflied chop to 1/8" thickness. On each half chop, place 1 ounce prosciutto and 1 piece of cheese. Sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon thyme. Roll chops to enclose filling. Coat with flour, dip in egg wash and roll in bread crumbs. In large frying pan, melt butter. Add pork and cook 8-10 minutes, turning frequently to brown all sides. Garnish with lemon wedges and parsley. Serves 4. Preparation time: 20 minutes.

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Landon Thomas Jr. THE BUSINESS CLASS

Teddy Bare

Buyout king Teddy Forstmann—known for his stunning returns (and Liz Hurley on his arm)—dropped $2 billion on bad tech plays. Did he take his eye off the ball—or swing (too late) for the fences?

“I WAS THINKING ABOUT ALL OF THIS WHILE I was on my boat last weekend,” Teddy Forstmann was saying a few weeks ago in the Los Angeles law offices of Skadden, Arps. The leveraged-buyout king was trying to explain to a roomful of irate McLeodUSA bondholders why they should be happy with the payout he was offering on their now worthless bonds.

“I'm in a tough spot,” he added, “just like you guys are.”

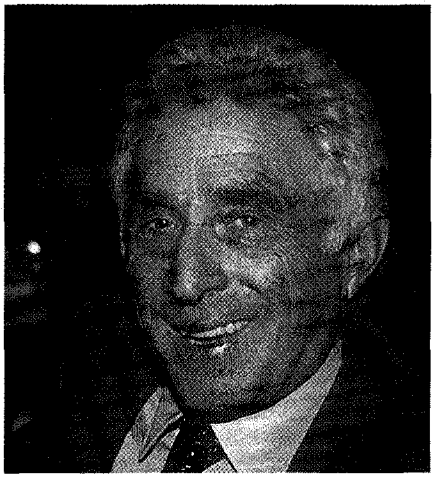
It was January 24. McLeod was going bankrupt, and Forstmann was expecting to take a $500 million write-down on his $1 billion investment. Now he was telling the bondholders that they would have to be happy with the scraps he had on offer: $670 million and some McLeod stock (now worth 18 cents a share, down 98 percent from its high)—not quite the $3 billion they thought they had coming to them.

Forstmann had a plan, though: McLeod would declare bankruptcy, and he would take control of the company and sink in another $175 million while doing his level best to make the partners some money.

“Why can't we get more?” the roomful of bond traders half his age pleaded.

The meeting lasted eight hours, and Forstmann, who had flown in that morning on his Gulfstream V, for once looked his 61 years. Yes, the year-round suntan still glowed, and his trim physique spoke well of the hundreds of hours invested on the links and at the tennis court. But a closer examination of the man revealed eyes shot with blood and a voice scratched and weary.

Finally, losing his last bit of patience, he burst out. “Look, McLeod will be filing for bankruptcy on the 31st, and that's final,” Forstmann said. “Plus, I have a golf date with Vijay Singh on February 1”—at the AT&T pro-am at Pebble Beach—“and I'm not going to miss it.”



BOWLING FOR DOLLARS: Teddy Forstmann, right, hired Erskine Bowles, above, to manage high-growth deals.

THESE DAYS, IT ISN'T JUST BONDHOLDERS (who eventually endorsed his plan) clamoring for cash from Teddy Forstmann. Last week, the state of Connecticut announced that it would be suing Teddy's firm, Forstmann Little, in civil court for having written down the state's $95 million pension-fund investment in XO Communications—Forstmann Little's other big telecom investment gone bad—to zero. “They double-crossed us,” said Attorney General Richard Blumenthal. “They pretended to be our partner and then they wiped us out.”

With the pressure mounting to put some money to work, and Erskine Bowles lined up to carry the ball, Forstmann invested a billion in McLeod. Bowles and other partners urged a more conservative $250 million stake. **But Forstmann overruled them.**

The losses are all the more staggering because Forstmann is such a legend in the buyout community. The list of his home runs is like a brand-name hall of fame: Dr Pepper, General Instrument, Gulfstream. Until 2001, his return on equity was an extraordinary 57 percent. He dates models—with reports of an occasional exception like Princess Di—donates hundreds of millions to charities, and always, always makes money for his partners.

The methodology has been frighteningly consistent: He zeroes in on some lumbering mess of a company, leverages himself up, and buys a huge chunk of it. A new high-profile CEO comes in, celebrity rainmakers are added to the board, massive restructuring ensues, and, a few years later, Forstmann sells out—taking billions in profit.

And everyone along for the ride gets rich. Especially his many Republican pals. Donald Rumsfeld, hired by Forstmann to revamp General Instrument in the early nineties, cashed in $23 million worth of GI stock in 1993. Colin Powell, a Gulfstream board member in the mid-nineties, sold $1.7

PHOTOGRAPHS: FROM TOP, PATRICK MCMULLAN; CYNTHIA JOHNSON/TIMEPIX.

million worth of stock in 1998. To say nothing of Henry Kissinger ($2.8 million), Michael Ovitz ($813,000), and George Shultz ($1.4 million).

But now, for the first time, his partners are anything but fat and happy. Forstmann Little all but vaporized $2 billion out of the $3 billion it invested in McLeod and XO. But it wasn't just telecom. The company also blew $95 million of limited-partner money on a run-of-the-mill Internet company called Metiom. All told, it's a shocking amount. Think of it this way: The biggest loss any mutual fund booked on Enron was only $600 million.

And his latest high-profile rainmaker—former Clinton White House chief of staff Erskine Bowles, who became a Forstmann partner and chairman of Metiom in 1999—ended up taking a good deal of the heat for the firm's disastrous high-tech investments. While press accounts have suggested that Forstmann was guilty, above all, of inattention—stepping away from the day-to-day management of the firm, and allowing Bowles to make costly mistakes—insiders say that it was Forstmann himself who was a late convert to high tech, while Bowles tagged along for the strange, sickening ride.

HOW'D IT HAPPEN? IN 1999, AS INTERNET AND telecom stocks soared, Teddy Forstmann found himself sitting on a large pile of cash (he sold out of Gulfstream for $2.4 billion) that needed a home. Forstmann himself was Old Economy all the way, with a tendency to sniff at investment fads. But the world was changing: Tech was throwing off billions for those who got in ahead of him.

At the same time, he had asked Bowles, who was a friend of Nicholas Forstmann, his younger brother, to join Forstmann Little as a senior partner. For the staunchly Republican Forstmann, it was an odd choice. Bowles was a Democrat, and Forstmann was repelled by most of what came out of the Clinton White House.

But there was no getting around it: The Forstmann Little shop needed a strong operational hand, and Bowles was well known for having brought some sanity to the messy Clinton White House. Bowles was also the founder of a regional investment boutique in North Carolina, Carousel Capital, that focused on the types of smaller, high-growth companies that were now catching Forstmann's eye. It should have been a good fit.

In April, Forstmann sent a supplement to his original offering memorandum to all his institutional clients, outlining the firm's high-growth investments in telecom, education, and business-outsourcing services. Now Bowles, who never pretended to be a high-tech-invest- *(Continued on page 123)*

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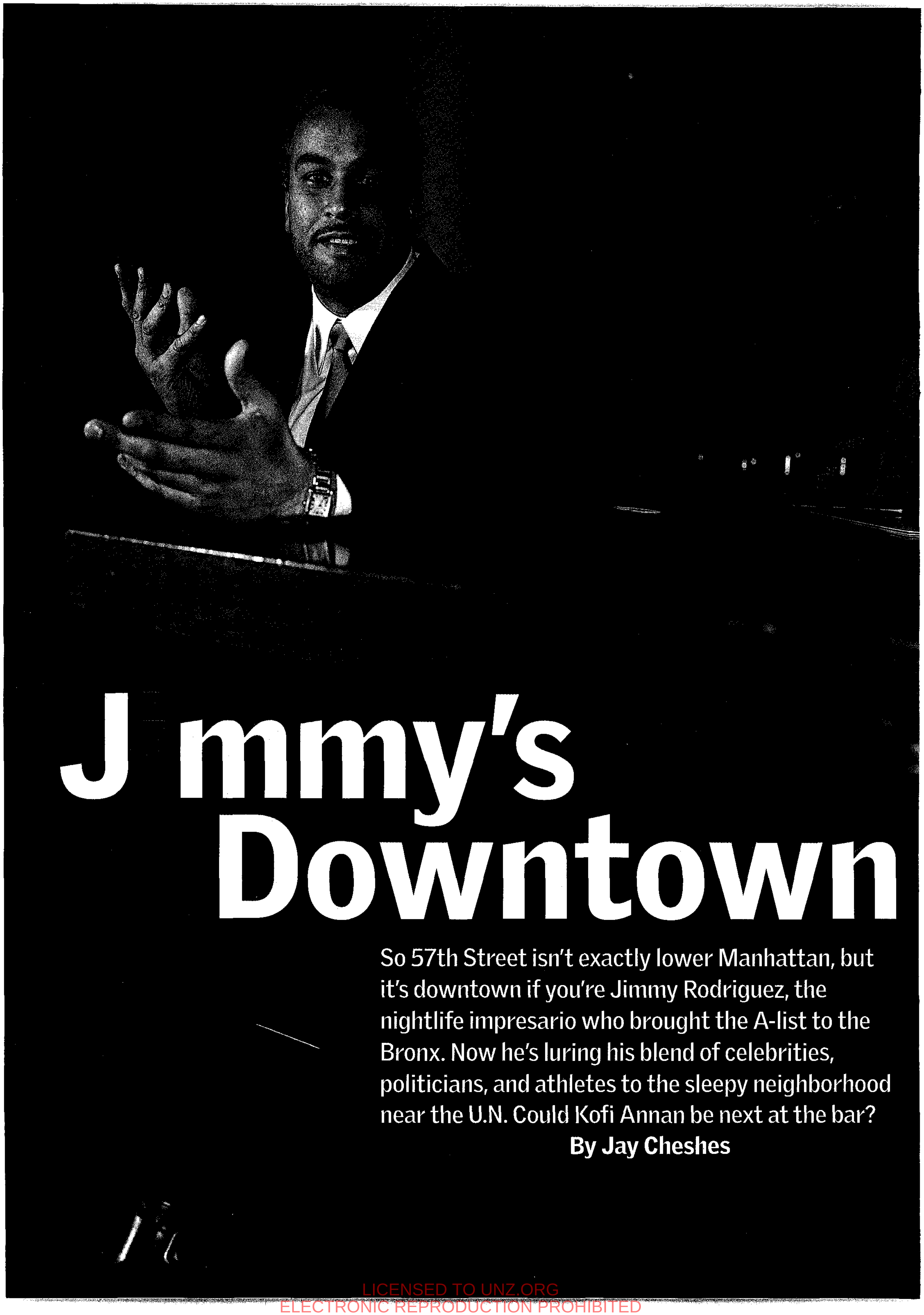

Jimmy's Downtown

So 57th Street isn't exactly lower Manhattan, but it's downtown if you're Jimmy Rodriguez, the nightlife impresario who brought the A-list to the Bronx. Now he's luring his blend of celebrities, politicians, and athletes to the sleepy neighborhood near the U.N. Could Kofi Annan be next at the bar?

By Jay Cheshes

JIMMY RODRIGUEZ STRIDES THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR OF his Harlem restaurant, Jimmy's Uptown, a duplex with an onyx bar, soft golden light, and an R&B soundtrack. Men in crisp suits and women with ziggurats of teased hair grab at his hand, begging for attention. "Hey Jimmy, how are you, my brother?" "Hey Jimmy, I *really* need to talk to you." Rodriguez brushes them off in a polite rasp. He glances at his watch, fiddles with his cell phone. "She's late," he says, impatiently waiting for his girlfriend to arrive. "She'll just have to eat on the way." • The maître d' brings him a vodka tonic. His chef comes out of the kitchen with a tower of grilled shrimp and avocado salad. "Can I get one of these in a container to go?" Rodriguez asks. Al Sharpton is standing at the bar; a line of cars is clogging the street outside. "We gotta get moving," Rodriguez says.

The 23-year-old he's been dating for the past seven months has just pulled up and is waiting in the driver's seat of his pearl-white Cadillac SUV. "She's one year younger than me," he says, with a mischievous grin. "Well, so what if I can't count?"

Jimmy Rodriguez is 39 years old. He is six feet three inches tall and an imposing 230 pounds. He hooked up with Carrie (he refuses to divulge her last name, perhaps in deference to his wife, from whom he has been separated for almost a decade but never divorced) after running into her one night at the China Club. "I had met her like five different times," he says. "She says that each time I'd see her I'd reintroduce myself." The China Club is a favorite haunt of the athletes who cram Jimmy's Bronx Café, the Knicks and Yankees and ballplayers from out of town who—along with local pols and Manhattan celebrities—helped turn it into that borough's most high-profile nightspot. In the early days, the papers anointed him the Latin Toots Shor. The label is outdated—Toots, after all, had only one place. Rodriguez is building an empire.

"I don't want to be a *multi*-millionaire," he says. "I'd be happy if at the end of twenty years I've built maybe 50 places, am building another five every year, and have got like a million dollars in the bank." For a high-school dropout who started off selling seafood from an ice-filled trash can under the Bronx River Parkway, his confidence is boundless. He's preparing for the opening this month—with a party thrown by Governor Pataki to celebrate Women's History Month—of his third space, a sleek SoHo-style bar and restaurant on 57th Street that he's coyly dubbed Jimmy's Downtown. "Where is downtown anyway?" he asks. "When you live in the Bronx, this *is* downtown."

"I think it's great that Jimmy's opening in midtown," says his friend Norma Kamali later that evening in the VIP balcony at the Apollo. "Jimmy's like a magnet. He draws people to himself. He's just responding to demand." Rodriguez and Kamali have been friends ever since event planner Robert Isabell first dragged her up to the Bronx Café, an enormous complex on Fordham Road, in the early nineties. During baseball season, the three of them sit together in the best seats at Yankee Stadium.

The new place (all Jimmy's, with no investors, he claims) is set to be as visually dramatic as his Harlem outpost; Ilan Waisbrod, the designer behind BondSt and Eugene, plans to put suede on one wall, big red roses on another, and a giant red pillar in the center of the dining room. Rodriguez says he nixed a proposal to put flat-screen TVs on the ceiling in the men's room. "When a big game is on, nobody would ever leave the bathroom," he says with a grin. Despite the new restaurant's somewhat sleepy location—on a residential block on the far eastern end of 57th Street—Rodriguez is showing plenty of his signature confidence. "How many places do you go where you find Latinos, African-Americans, Caucasians, people from all over breaking bread, listening to jazz and R&B and old school and a little salsa and a little merengue and a little cha-cha-cha?"

"I don't want to be a *multi*-millionaire," Rodriguez says. "I'd be happy if at the end of twenty years I've built maybe 50 places, am building another five every year, and have got like a million dollars in the bank."

Of course some of the "people from all over" are drawn by the prospect of seeing one of Jimmy's boldface friends in a front-room banquette: Spike Lee, Venus Williams. Even Ian Schrager, the nightlife arbiter of a different decade, has checked out the scene. "Schrager came up to the Bronx a couple of times," says Rodriguez. "He told me, 'You've done what I did in my time without the drugs.' "

But although he surrounds himself with cops and politicians, Rodriguez's image isn't quite squeaky clean. Growing up in the Bronx, he got into his share of trouble—a lot of which he terms being in the wrong place at the wrong time—and even spent a week in jail. Mariscos del Caribe, the seafood restaurant he opened with his father before striking out on his own with the Bronx Café, was investigated for drug dealing. And the Bronx Café has had its problems—gunshots on the sidewalk, alleged drug dealers inside—enough to have sparked a temporary ban of the place by Major League Baseball in 1995. More trouble followed that same year, when Rodriguez hosted a reception for Fidel Castro and furious demonstrators lined the blocks around the Café.

Still, Rodriguez's brushes with controversy have only added to his mystique; he's at once charming and slightly sinister, Frank Sinatra with cappuccino skin. When Rodriguez swings over to the parking garage across 57th Street to grab his white Jaguar convertible, the owner throws up his hands and insists, "For you, Jimmy, no charge." Late one Thursday night, Rodriguez and Carrie pass a glamorous mob gathered on the sidewalk outside the Mercer Hotel. "Hey, it's the *Post* fashion party," says Carrie. "Did you get an invite?" "I don't need one," says Rodriguez. A few minutes later, he's shaking hands and chatting with the burly men guarding the door.

With Rodriguez, even the smallest favors aren't easily forgotten. "Jimmy's heavy on the issue of loyalty," says Congressman José Serrano. "No matter how successful he is, he never forgets that he comes from the streets."

Late afternoon, the day before the Bronx Café will celebrate its ninth anniversary, Rodriguez is in Katz's Deli on Houston Street, wearing a dark-blue Versace suit and eating a hot pastrami sandwich. "I have so much going on, I have to be focused, to be a little bit smarter for the next couple of months," he says. "I can't be going to bed at five in the morning anymore." He wipes the mustard from the side of his mouth and waves across the room, acknowledging a stout black guy in a World Series Yankees jacket—"one of the guys who rakes the field in the fifth inning." Rodriguez pauses. "I can't wait for the new place to open," he says. "I'm going to target everyone and everywhere. It's close to the U.N.—why can't I have a couple of heads of state there once a month? Why not? It's nice enough. I can make it happen." ■

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MATTHEW SALACUSE

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What the Market Will Bear

You thought September 11 and the recession would bring prices down from the stratosphere? They did—but the free ride may be over. By Christopher Bonanos

SIX MONTHS AGO, IT SEEMED AS IF THE REAL-ESTATE BUBBLE, LIKE THE AGE OF Irony, was over. New Yorkers were debating not what neighborhood they could afford but whether they could risk being New Yorkers at all anymore. • Ken Scheble, an investment-banking consultant, was in 4 World Trade Center on September 11, and by the time he got home that night, he and his wife, Melissa, were talking about sending their 1-year-old daughter to their hometown of St. Louis, to live with her grandparents. "I was saying, *Thank God we'd bought on the Upper West Side,*" he says now, of the apartment they'd purchased a year before. "We'd been looking in TriBeCa." Six months later, Jordan Scheble is still a New Yorker. Her dad is working a few blocks away, at a client's office on Wall Street. And the

ILLUSTRATION BY PETER AND MARIA HOEY

family has sold their Upper West Side place for a substantial profit and signed a contract on a new loft—off Church Street, a few blocks above ground zero.

"I thought, *TriBeCa is depressed, and I can get a much bigger place,*" says Ken Scheble. "So I put my place on the market for $800,000, which I thought was, you know, pie in the sky. It sold in two days.

"The first place we saw in TriBeCa was 2,800 square feet, no fireplace, and anyway, you never buy the first place you see. And then everyone in January got the same idea—prices are down about 15 percent, and everyone who was on the fence jumped in. So we told our broker"—Corcoran's Lawrence Schier—"*If anything like that place opens up, we want it.*" One did, and they pounced. Since then, says Scheble, "six people have said, 'If you want to flip this thing, I'll buy it *now.*' "

DID THESE PEOPLE NOT HEAR ABOUT THE REcession? And weren't we a city under siege just a few months ago? New York being New York, both of these facts produced not panic, not philosophizing, not mass exodus, but bargain-hunting. Rather than going into a long slump, the market merely took a little post-attack sabbatical, returning refreshed and ready to go. People who'd spent years waiting for prices to top out saw their chance, and—like runners who can suddenly see the finish line—they've put on a burst of energy. Open houses have been jammed, albeit sometimes with more browsers than buyers. "I had 80 people at one," says Dolly Lenz, an Insignia Douglas Elliman vice-president. "I had the doorman keep a big group downstairs, and brought them up in shifts."

As a result, the post-attack 10 to 15 percent drop felt in many neighborhoods has essentially evaporated. "December was actually a strong month," says Jeff Jackson, a partner in MMJ Appraisals. The more recent numbers, he says, look to be even better. Still, this isn't the vertiginous market that drove us all nuts. "It's not like a couple of years ago," admits Corcoran's Marlene Steiner. "If you have a property that's unique, there's a bidding war. But if you have a cookie-cutter, prices are stable."

"I have friends who are looking for the most devastated area they can find," says one TriBeCa buyer. "They figure that in a couple of years, they'll be set."

About financial risk—after all, this could be the next Internet-style bubble, or even a last-gasp bounce before the chill really sets in—about the city's shaky budget, even about national security, buyers all say they've made their peace. "I'm taking a risk," admits Scheble, "but I don't think it's that big anymore. If you're two blocks away from ground zero, you're free—you can't see it. I have friends, single people, who are looking for the most devastated area they can find. They figure that in a couple of years, this area's gonna be really nice, and they'll be set."

TO AN EXTENT, YOU CAN THANK (OR BLAME) Alan Greenspan. In the past six months, mortgage rates have dipped well below 7 percent for a 30-year fixed. That means buyers who'd otherwise be priced out are sensing a tiny window of opportunity. "We doubled our space for only about $1,500 per month more," says Scheble, "mostly because of the difference in interest rates."

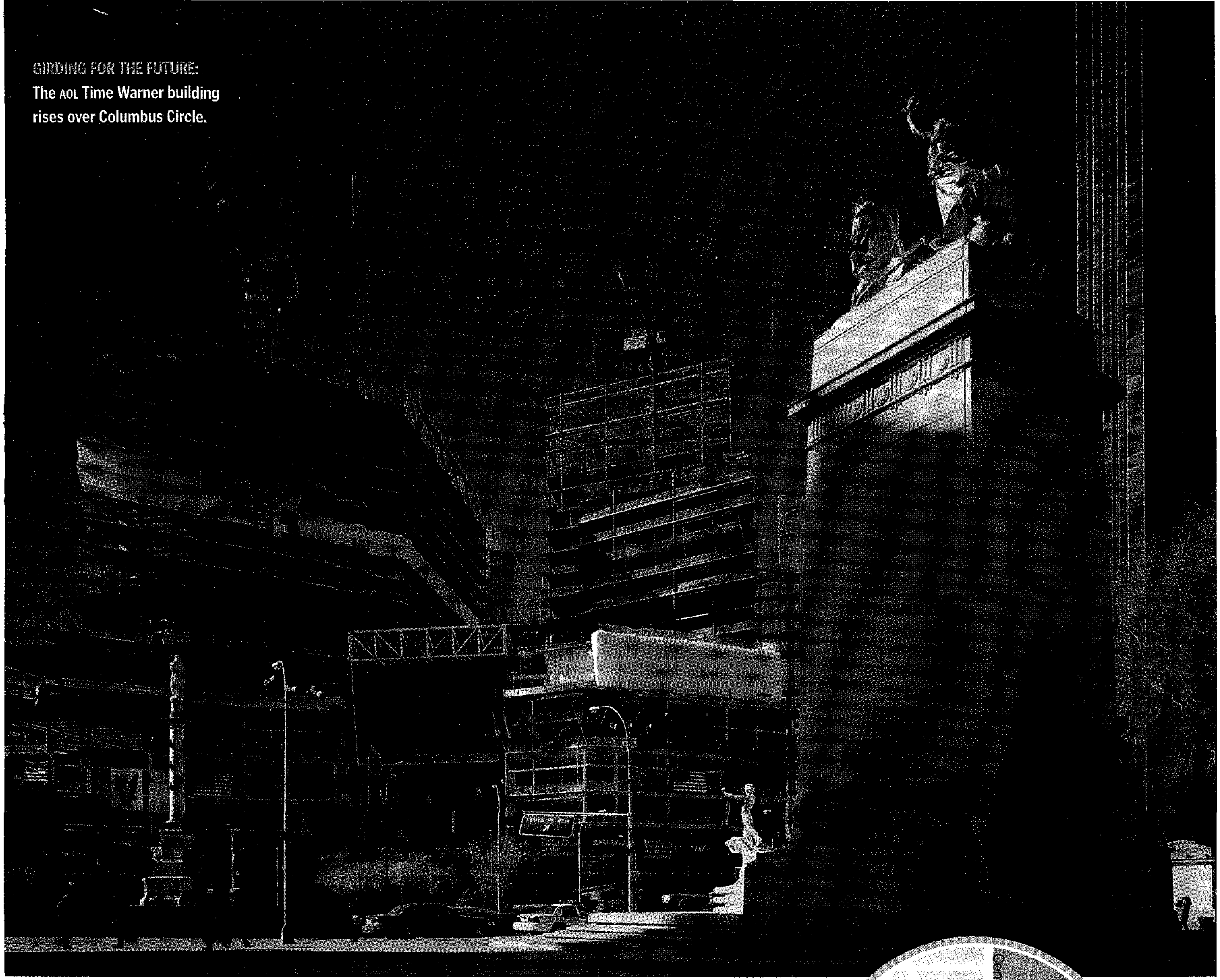
The same goes for people who've been saving for five years, only to see the market outrun them: They've finally caught up. Says Stribling & Associates vice-president Siim Hanja, "There are people out there looking again who were looking in Long Island and New Jersey just a few months ago. It's the old story of New York—there's just so much energy and power here that it regenerates." Adds Steiner, "The stock market stinks, so people are putting their money in real estate. People who've been around the periphery for a couple of years are coming in and saying *Let's do it.*" (One guy, she says, took the plunge when he realized he'd paid $80,000 in rent the year before.) Studios and one-bedrooms are the hottest part of the market, because of all the first-time buyers leaping in.

Besides, there's less panic in the air. "People are feeling, *Nothing's going to happen to New York,*" says Schier. Even if the optimism is overstated—and, after all, brokers have a vested interest in high prices—we're probably not headed for a 1991-style free fall. That plunge came after a stock-market drop, yes, but it also coincided with a horrifying crime rate, a mayor unpopular with the business community, and a declining population. None of those things is true this time. "It's in everyone's interest to make New York do well now," notes Benjamin James broker James Ferrari. Scheble put it even more straightforwardly: "Everyone's been realizing that we're going to get $20 billion to get the city together."

The only business that's been slow to recover, it would seem, is the tippy-top of the luxury market. "Things weren't selling in the $10 million to $15 million range," says Elliman's Dolly Lenz. But that territory is showing faint signs of life, she's quick to add, and "in the $5 million-to-$10 million range, things are flourishing."

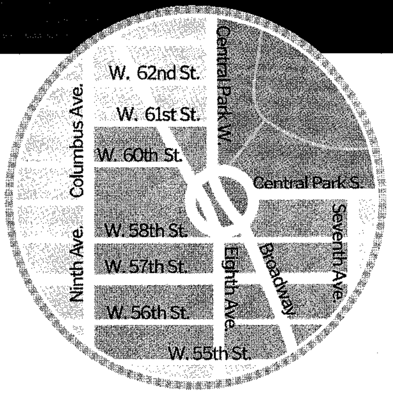
THERE IS ONE PLACE, AT LEAST, WHERE IT looks like a recession: rentals. Virtually all the past few years' new construction, especially in Chelsea but also on the East and West Sides, was of luxury rental buildings, and the market's saturated. "We were overwhelmed with product at the end of last year," says Stribling's downtown rental manager, Stan Ponte. "It's going to take some time for that inventory to be absorbed. We've seen the return of the $1,200 studio in prime neighborhoods"—for apartments that could've drawn $2,000 at their peak. In Chelsea, where new towers have sprung up along Sixth Avenue like crocuses, "I've seen as much as three months free," he adds.

But you'd better not wait. "It's leveled off and stabilized," says Brian G. Edwards, who runs Halstead's rental division, Feathered Nest. "Through February, we've had a relatively busy period as well. Normally, the dead period in renting is January through mid-March, and the demand—people who were sitting on the fence forever—is coming back." The rental market, adds Ponte, "has the same feel that the sale market had at the beginning of the year. People are trying to lock the owners in to long-term deals. They know those prices won't be there long, and they fear a backlash from the owners who'll have to absorb a bad year." In short, says Edwards, "we've reached the bottom." And as anyone who's ever dealt with New York real estate knows, by the time you hear about the bottom, you may already be too late. ■



GIRDING FOR THE FUTURE:
The AOL Time Warner building rises over Columbus Circle.

Five to Grow On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Broadway
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In a city that never stops reinventing itself, office buildings become luxury rentals, flea markets give way to towering condominiums, and sleepy brownstone enclaves gentrify overnight. Five neighborhoods where change is in the air. By Laurie Sandell

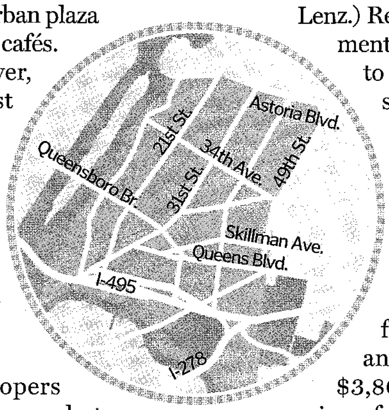
Columbus Circle

From an office on the fifty-second floor of Carnegie Hall Tower, Dolly Lenz peers over her glasses at the construction site for One Central Park. "*Homeless* people used to live around here," she says with a shudder. "Now it's going to be the No. 1 neighborhood in New York—and therefore, the world!" Lenz, a top broker at Insignia Douglas Elliman, is not known for her rhetorical restraint, but this time, she may be onto something. When finished, the two 80-story towers now under construction

PHOTOGRAPHED BY PAK FUNG WONG

will contain 191 luxury condos, a Mandarin Oriental Hotel, the headquarters of Jazz at Lincoln Center, a 14,000-square-foot Cartier store, AOL Time Warner's headquarters, CNN's studios, a new Jean-Georges Vongerichten steakhouse, and a retail complex. Four of the ten penthouses have already sold, at prices ranging from $25 million unfinished to $40 million with the works (that's $4,000 per square foot), even though the apartments won't be finished for another two years.

PAST IS PROLOGUE: Named for its statue, which was donated to the city by an Italian-American group in 1892, Columbus Circle was once a chic urban plaza ringed by theaters and cafés. Over the years, however, the area became best known for automobile dealerships and the mammoth 3.4-acre Coliseum convention center, which was eventually pushed into obsolescence by the Javits Center.

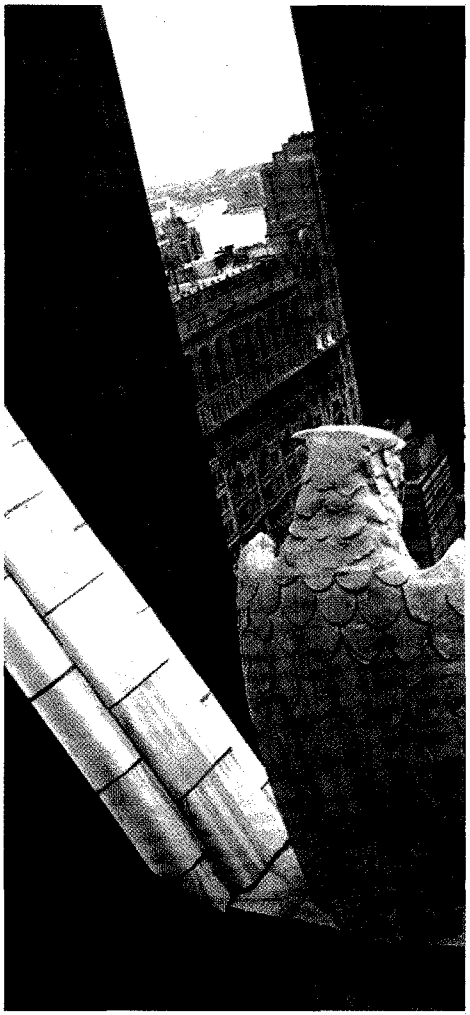


SHADOW WAR: Developers have eyed the site for years, but community activists beat back a succession of proposals, including Moshe Safdie's plan to build a skyscraper there in 1985. (Jackie Kennedy Onassis and other neighborhood activists opened hundreds of umbrellas in Central Park to illustrate the shadow the building would cast across the grass.) Ultimately, developers Stephen M. Ross, Kenneth A. Himmel, and William L. Mack were awarded a contract to build on the site in 1999, on the condition that they maintain a "view corridor" down 59th Street.

COMING ATTRACTIONS: Donald Trump just completed work on his fourth structure at Trump Place on Riverside Boulevard. And the Park Imperial is nearing completion on 56th between Seventh and Broadway; Deepak Chopra just bought an apartment there, and the building will also be headquarters to Random House. ("That makes the southern border very secure," says Lenz.) Residents who own apartments in the area can expect to see their property value skyrocket, and Ian Schrager's Hudson Hotel will finally have a Zip Code to be proud of.

THE NUMBERS: Rents for studios start at $2,300, one-bedrooms range from $2,900 to $3,200, and two-bedrooms from $3,800 to $4,500. Co-op prices for studios range from $150,000 to $350,000, one-bedrooms from $300,000 to $650,000, and two-bedrooms from $450,000 to $1 million-plus.

THE FALLOUT: The beloved Coliseum bookstore, in business for close to three decades, closed in January because of rent hikes. Some in the neighborhood worry that that's only the beginning.

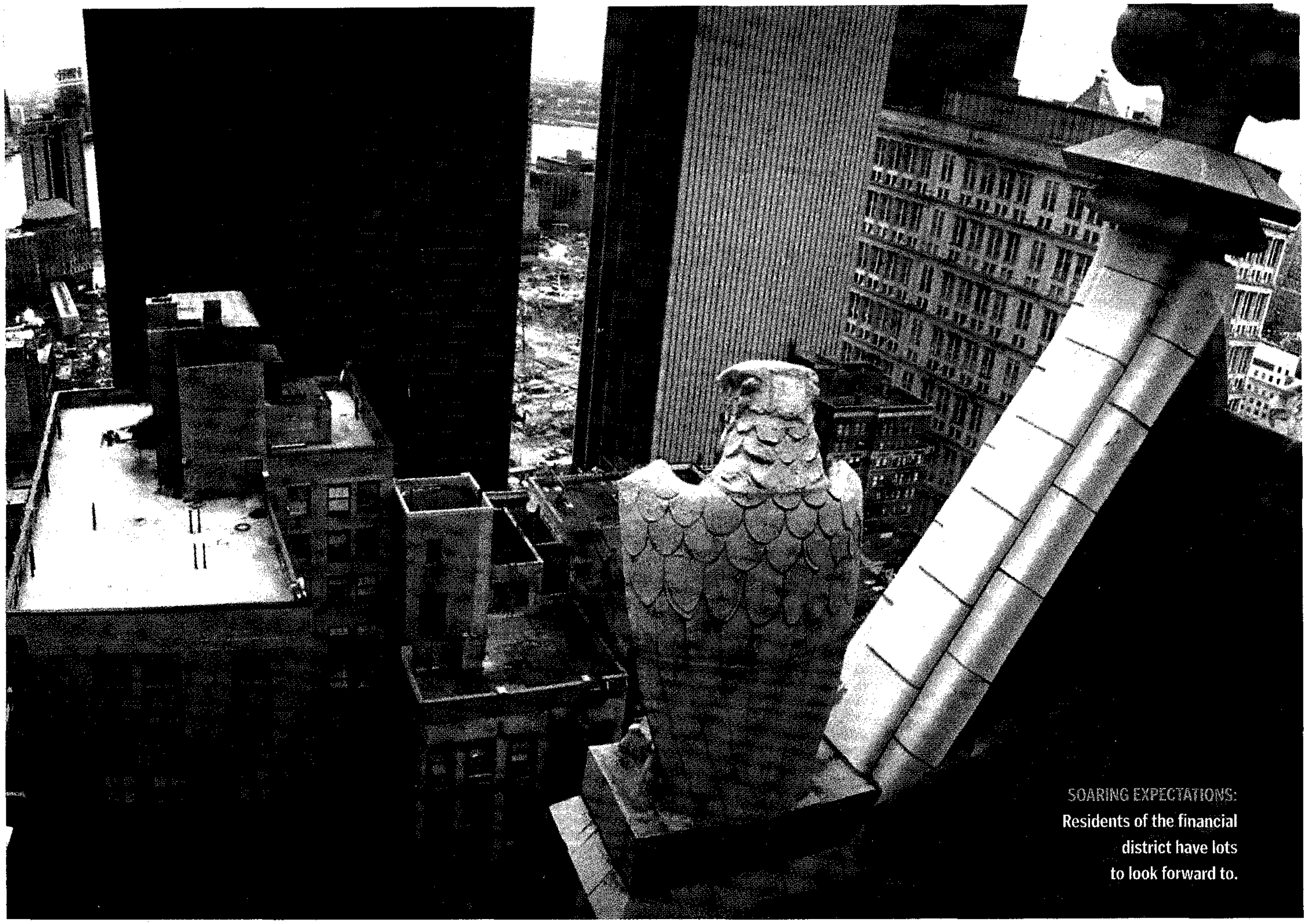


NOTHING BUT BLUE SKIES: Condo high-rises have transformed the Queens waterfront along the East River.

LONG ISLAND

Long Island City

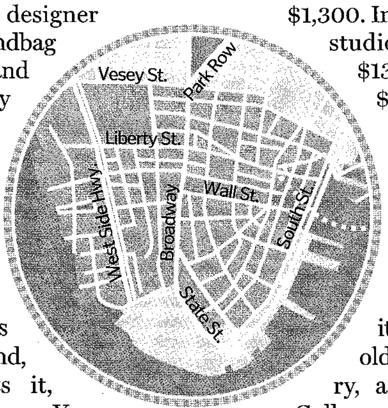
Liz Picca, owner of City View Cleaners, a mom-and-pop laundry started by her parents in 1984, interrupts our conversation continually to give directions, say thank-you to someone dropping off money he owes, and yell "Ma! Ma!" to get her mother's attention. When one of her customers, Palmina Delagati, perished on 9/11—and her sister mentioned she'd been a die-hard Rangers fan—Picca called her friend Tony Verderame of Ess & Vee Acoustical Contractors, who called his friend Tony Mazzarella, owner of the Waterfront Crab House, who called Rod Gilbert, former captain of the New York Rangers—who showed up at Delagati's memorial at St. Mary's Church. It remains to be seen whether that kind of small-town fellowship will weather the arrival of luxury high-rises, which have been cropping up along the waterfront in the past few years. When the Citylights co-op opened a dry cleaner, Picca lost 40 percent of her business overnight. "They're all yuppies, and



SOARING EXPECTATIONS: Residents of the financial district have lots to look forward to.

they don't want to walk a block with their cleaning," she explains with a sigh. "Can you blame them?"

THE OLD COUNTRY: The neighborhood is a true melting pot of Greeks, Italians, Indians, and Eastern Europeans. Rows of apartment houses are interspersed with commercial streets and the occasional velvet-rope nightclub; you can still find a dressmaker to copy a designer frock for about $50. Handbag designer Neal Decker and his boyfriend, Danny Evans, who is Simon Doonan's assistant, pay a mere $769 a month for their two-bedroom apartment, but living cheaply has its trade-offs: At night, prostitutes tap on car windows in Queensboro Plaza, and, as one resident puts it, "Everyone smokes in Queens. You need an iron lung to go into the bagel shop."



ON THE WATERFRONT: Thanks to the Queens West Development Project, the waterfront has become hot property in recent years, with plans to develop luxury condos, a riverfront boardwalk, parks, and restaurants. The Avalon Riverview—a newly built luxury rental—offers postcard views of the Manhattan skyline.

THE NUMBERS: Rents for studio apartments start at $850 a month, one-bedrooms at $1,000, and two-bedrooms at about $1,300. In the Citylights building, studio co-ops start at $135,000, one-bedrooms at $160,000, and two-bedrooms at $275,000.

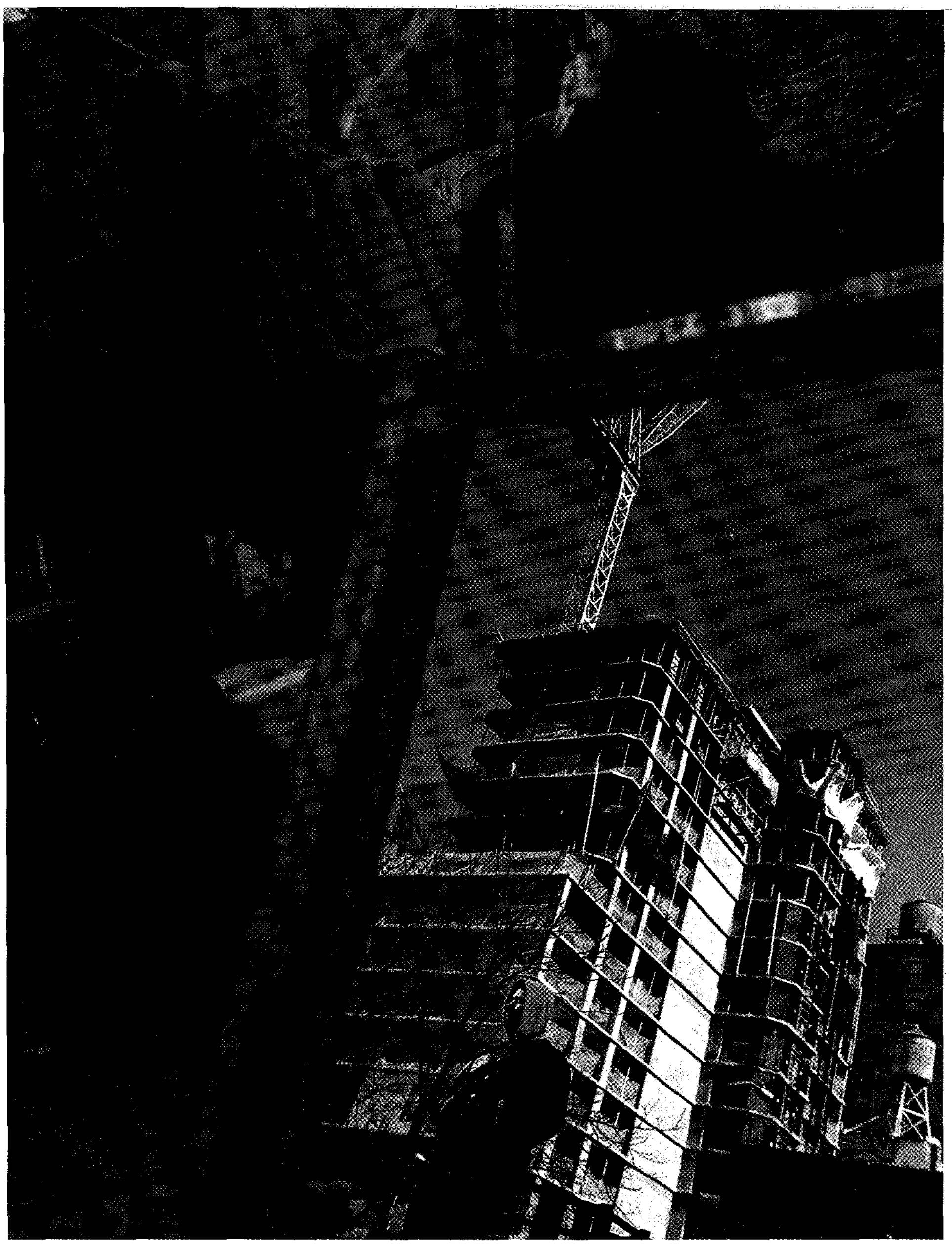
CULTURE CLUB: P.S. 1 has been drawing Manhattanites across the bridge for years, MOMA has temporarily moved its entire collection to the old Swingline staple factory, and the SoHo Dorsky Gallery now resides in a former diamond-sorting plant.

PIPE DREAMS: On the Boulevard, a Madison Avenue–style boutique that sold gourmet chocolates and bath products, closed after eighteen months on Vernon Boulevard. Working-class families weren't ready to plunk down $35 for candles imported from Paris.

The Financial District

Architect and developer Joseph Pell Lombardi was one of the first to see the appeal of Wall Street—he bought 55 Liberty Street in 1978, and converted the building to luxury co-ops in 1980—and he still believes the area has plenty of room for growth as a residential neighborhood. "If you converted 1 million square feet of commercial space to residential space, you would still only have converted a fraction of the square feet of space that exists on Wall Street," he says. As long as people like Patty Rockmore, co-owner of advertising firm Patty & Toshi, keep moving in, developers will create space for them. Rockmore sold her Park Avenue co-op to renovate cottages in Southampton, then changed her mind and returned to the city in January. "I was on the board of my building, and I loved it—*loved* it," she says. Now Rockmore pays $1,800 a month for a large studio at 100 John Street that "looks like a

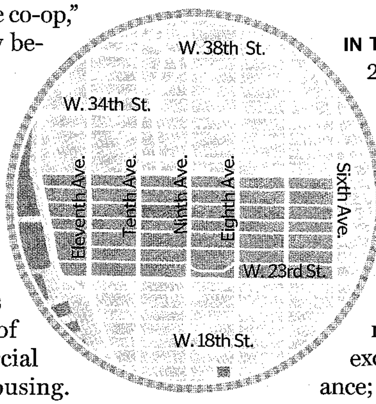
MAPS BY JOE ZEFF



GLASS HOUSES: Everywhere you look in North Chelsea, a new luxury rental building pops into view.

"Prada showroom," with frosted-glass panels to offset her bedroom and a view of the Manhattan Bridge. "People like it better than my Park Avenue co-op," she says. "It's like a new beginning."

IDENTITY CRISIS: During the recessionary periods that occurred in the seventies and the nineties, developers took advantage of low prices and tax incentives to convert millions of square feet of commercial space to residential housing. With each economic revival, however, prices went up and development stopped. The residential market was just beginning to pick up again before September 11. Now all eyes are on the site of the former World Trade Center, which will determine the next chapter in the Wall Street area's schizophrenic history.



IN THE PIPELINE: In February 2001, the Economic Development Corporation took over 45 Wall Street with plans to build a new stock exchange, and Rockrose Development was instructed to move its tenants out of the building. For the moment, the fate of the exchange hangs in the balance; it may become part of the new construction, or move to a new location altogether.

THE NUMBERS: Typical of the local housing stock is 99 John Street, a converted office building with a doorman, roof deck, and Art Deco murals in the lobby. Large studios with eleven-foot ceilings start at $1,550 a month, one-bedrooms at $1,850, and two-bedrooms at $2,500.

Chelsea Heights

When Shaun Osher arrived in Manhattan from South Africa in 1989, the first thing he did was go to the INS building on 25th Street and Seventh Avenue to get his Social Security card. Ten years later, he found himself selling multi-million-dollar lofts in the very same building, now called the Chelsea Mercantile. "That building has been very good to me," says Osher, 35, a senior vice-president at Insignia Douglas Elliman. "It's my American dream." No one would have equated the "Dirty Thirties" with the American dream as recently as three years ago, when "Chelsea Heights" was a no-man's-land of trash-strewn lots and check-cashing stores, and Billy's Topless was the only local landmark. But when the Chelsea Atelier was converted to luxury condos in 1997, others followed. Since then, developers have bought up loft warehouses all over the neighborhood and converted them to luxury residences such as the Caroline and the Capitol, both on Sixth Avenue near the flea market.

NORTHERN EXPOSURE: The recent real-estate boom has created new boundaries for Chelsea, which now extends from 14th Street, between Sixth Avenue and the West Side Highway, all the way up to 30th Street. Most brokers won't take clients who request Chelsea to the northern reaches without some explanation. "You have to kind of ease them into it," says Osher. Ryan Fitzpatrick, a bond analyst, and Tom Cunningham, a strategy consultant at Interdimensions, didn't need much encouragement in January, when they first laid eyes on a two-bedroom duplex on 29th Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues, with a working fireplace, one and a half baths, and 1,150 square feet of space—for less than $500,000. They are currently in contract.

THE NUMBERS: Studios range from $1,600 to $2,000 a month, one-bedrooms $2,200 to $2,600, two-bedrooms $2,500 to $3,500. Buyers can expect to pay $400 to $700 per square foot, or up to $1,000 per square foot in luxury buildings like the Chelsea Mercantile.

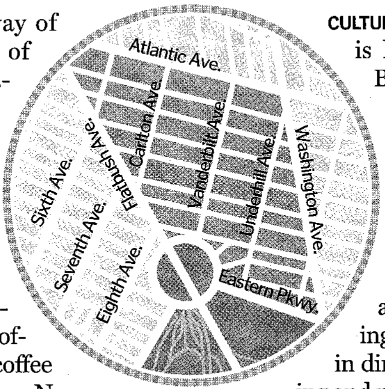
PROMISES, PROMISES: In a recent speech, Mayor Bloomberg voiced support for building parks and more open spaces in this area, expanding the Javits Center, and bringing the 7 train as far west as Eleventh Avenue. Plans to convert the 34th Street post office into an Amtrak station are going forward.

Prospect Heights

Richard Lazarus, an 81-year-old broker who has lived in Prospect Heights since 1956, still can't get his mind around the rise in real-estate prices over the past three years. "The jumps have been fantastic," he says. "Brownstones that sold for $400,000 to $450,000 three years ago are going for $1 million today." The revitalization of the neighborhood began in the late eighties with the restoration of abandoned apartment houses by private developers, and continued in the late nineties with city-financed conversions for middle-income tenants. The neighborhood runs from Eastern Parkway to Atlantic Avenue, and from Flatbush Avenue to Washington Avenue, with leafy blocks of brownstones on Sterling, Park, Prospect Place, and St. Marks Avenue. Farther east, toward Crown Heights, where tenements line Vanderbilt, and north toward Atlantic Avenue, values decrease. But developers are drooling over the success of recent conversions like the old *Daily News* building (which is already 80 percent sold) and the Spalding ball factory (100 percent sold).

SIGNS OF THE TIMES: As housing prices have risen, the median age of the population has fallen. But Prospect Heights remains an ethnically diverse, family-oriented area where many residents have held on to their homes for decades. "People want to come to Prospect Heights now, and nobody's selling," explains Lazarus.

THE NUMBERS: Studios rent for $850 to $1,200, one-bedrooms for $1,200 to $1,600, and two-bedrooms for $1,800 to $2,300. Brownstones start at $750,000 and range as high as $1 million. Peter Baran, 39, a former art director for *Saturday Night Live*, and his wife, Maya, 32, who is expecting their first child, bought their three-story brownstone in 1999 for $418,000, after getting priced out of the Manhattan market. "We worried about what to expect: Is it dangerous? Will we have anything in common with our neighbors?" Peter recalls. They took the plunge anyway, because they needed the space. Now they cook in, hang out on their stoop, and talk across the fence to their neighbors. "Why do people live in Manhattan with no way of escaping the tyranny of their financial situation?" he asks. "So they can get good takeout?"



URBAN AMENITIES: Tom's Restaurant—reputedly the Tom's Diner of Suzanne Vega's song—is a neighborhood institution where the owner often passes out cups of coffee to patrons waiting on line. Newer to town is Tavern on Dean, an English pub-style restaurant with white oak floors and a long mahogany bar, serving New American fare for the past eighteen months (average entrée: $16).

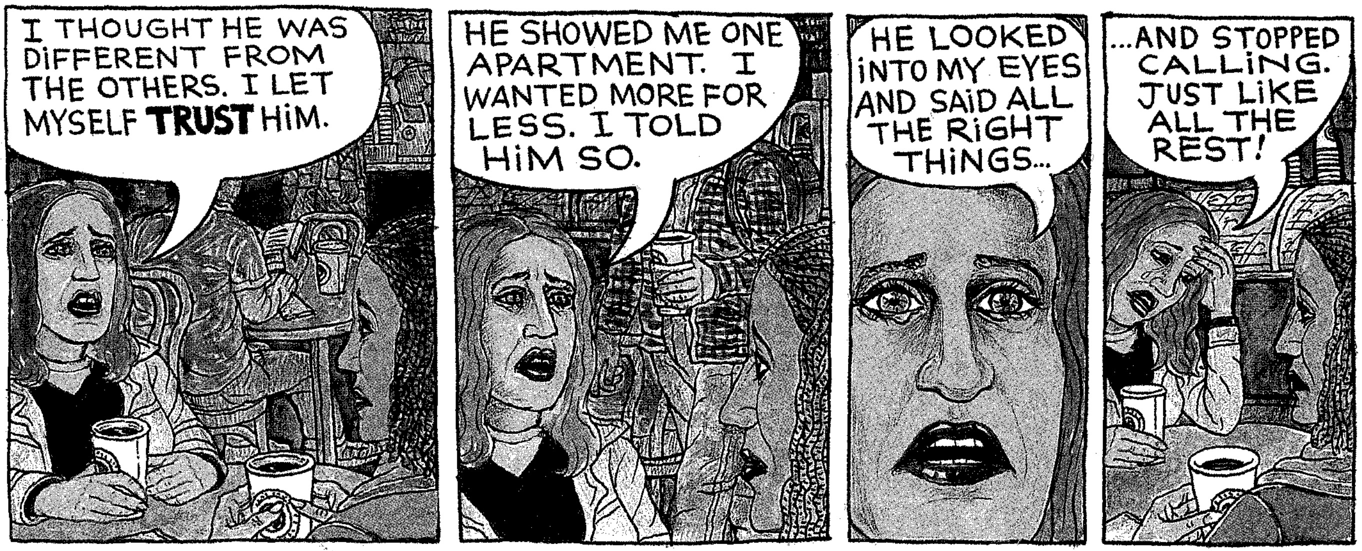
CULTURE CLUB: Prospect Heights is home to the Brooklyn Botanical Garden, the central branch of the Brooklyn Public Library, and the Brooklyn Museum.

CONS: Many of the brownstones were used as rooming houses during the Depression, and are in dire need of better plumbing and modern kitchens. Schools are mixed. P.S. 9 in Prospect Heights consistently underperforms on standardized tests, while P.S. 321 and the Brooklyn New School in Park Slope have won accolades for academic excellence. ■

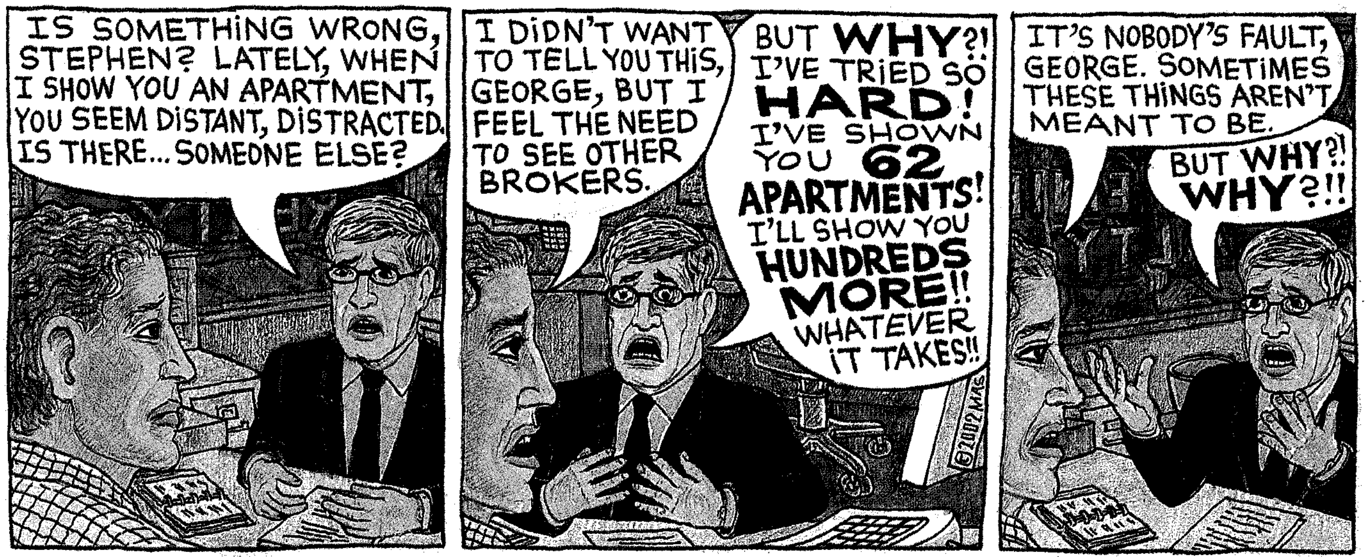
STOOP DREAMS: Prospect Heights offers quiet brownstone blocks at significantly lower prices than nearby Park Slope.

BUYERTOON

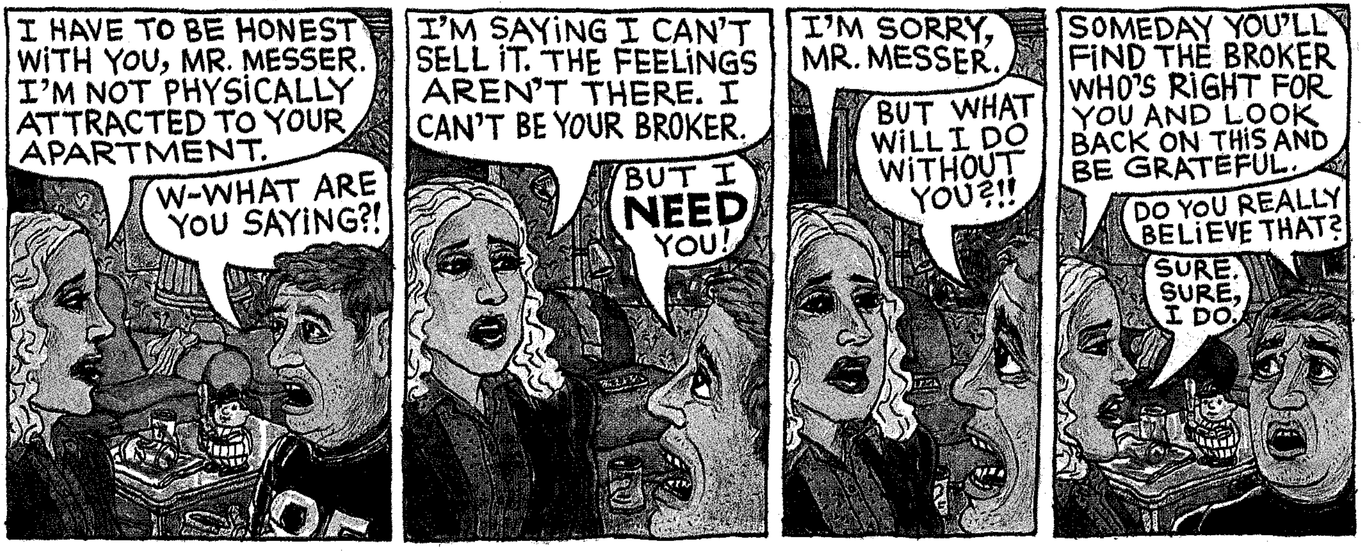
MARK ALAN STAMATY


I THOUGHT HE WAS DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHERS. I LET MYSELF **TRUST** HIM.
HE SHOWED ME ONE APARTMENT. I WANTED MORE FOR LESS. I TOLD HIM SO.
HE LOOKED INTO MY EYES AND SAID ALL THE RIGHT THINGS...
...AND STOPPED CALLING. JUST LIKE ALL THE REST!

BROKERTOON


IS SOMETHING WRONG, STEPHEN? LATELY, WHEN I SHOW YOU AN APARTMENT, YOU SEEM DISTANT, DISTRACTED. IS THERE... SOMEONE ELSE?
I DIDN'T WANT TO TELL YOU THIS, GEORGE, BUT I FEEL THE NEED TO SEE OTHER BROKERS.
BUT **WHY**?! I'VE TRIED SO **HARD**! I'VE SHOWN YOU **62 APARTMENTS**! I'LL SHOW YOU **HUNDREDS MORE**!! WHATEVER IT TAKES!!
©2002 M.A.S.
IT'S NOBODY'S FAULT, GEORGE. SOMETIMES THESE THINGS AREN'T MEANT TO BE.
BUT **WHY**?! **WHY**?!!

SELLERTOON


I HAVE TO BE HONEST WITH YOU, MR. MESSER. I'M NOT PHYSICALLY ATTRACTED TO YOUR APARTMENT.
W-WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!
I'M SAYING I CAN'T SELL IT. THE FEELINGS AREN'T THERE. I CAN'T BE YOUR BROKER.
BUT I **NEED** YOU!
I'M SORRY, MR. MESSER.
BUT WHAT WILL I DO WITHOUT YOU?!!
SOMEDAY YOU'LL FIND THE BROKER WHO'S RIGHT FOR YOU AND LOOK BACK ON THIS AND BE GRATEFUL.
DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT?
SURE. SURE, I DO.

Buyers Are From Mars Brokers Are From Venus

Looking for the perfect apartment means having to say you're sorry—to your broker. How to manage one of the most important relationships you'll ever have. By Sarah Bernard

WHEN ONE 30-YEAR-OLD MUSEUM CURATOR FIRST MET HER BROKER, SHE seemed like the answer to a prayer. The $3,000 one-bedroom the curator was renting on the Upper East Side had been a nightmare to find, and even though she wanted to buy a place, she was wary of getting involved with another overbearing real-estate professional. Then a co-worker referred her to an agent who seemed to know exactly what the curator and her husband were looking for. She was friendly, efficient, and sophisticated to boot. "We went into one place that wasn't really right, and she said, 'Absolutely not! We're getting out of here!' and walked out right away. I felt like 'Okay, she really gets it,' " the curator says, meaning "she really gets me." "I met all her broker friends at the open houses she took me to. They all shopped at Scoop." (The curator shops almost exclusively at Scoop.) All through the fall, her new companion squired her around the city, and together they critiqued lobby décor, inspected closets, and admired roof gardens. And then suddenly, inexplicably, the romance was over. "After Christmas," says the curator, "she just didn't call. Basically, I got dumped."

The curator seems to have made the most common mistake in her broker relationship: She believed her broker liked her *for her.* Now, the curator is a perfectly nice person—but nothing could be further from the truth.

It's easy to see how the curator could be deceived, however. A client's relationship with a broker can be as thrilling as romance—what, in New York, is more exciting than real estate?—and it follows a similar set of rules. Relationships often begin at open houses or through matchmaking friends who set you up. "He kept saying 'You're funny' and touching my shoulder," says an entertainment lawyer of the Bellmarc broker who followed him out onto the balcony at an open house in Murray Hill. "Now he keeps calling me up, telling me how much he likes me. He leaves messages like 'I think we could work well together.' "

The courtship is highly stylized, rife with posturing and euphemism and tactical white lies. Just as in real romance, both client and broker learn things they don't want to know about the other, wise up to their tricks, grow bored—or find true real-estate happiness in the apartment of their dreams. Just remember: Love has got nothing to do with it—although when you successfully close on an apartment, you may actually want to kiss your broker.

WHAT IS YOUR PARTNER REALLY THINKING?

"Sometimes you get involved in a long-term relationship that is going nowhere because it's not a real buyer," says Bruce Rabbino, a broker with Greenthal. "One person I was with for quite some time would always find something wrong at the very last second. If it was supposed to be a five-bedroom condo in a new high-rise, no more than ten years old, at such-and-such dollars and with a nice view, I'd find the *exact* property and he'd say, 'Well, I think the dining room is a little small.' " He sighs. "I was much younger, so I was anxious to show anything. But I must tell you, I think I was being used as weekend entertainment for a woman he was dating. These apartment viewings were no more important than the lunches at Petrossian," he says. "It just took a while for it to sink in that he was just being a user."

Brokers, meanwhile, are not exactly free of ulterior motives. One newly married writer and her husband fell in love with a two-bedroom apartment in the Ice House, a conversion on North Moore Street. As they understood it, their bid was the highest, but the seller's broker seemed to be passive-aggressively edging them out of the deal. "She'd say, 'You asked about the lawsuit' "—condo owners had instigated a lawsuit to get the developer to finish the building—" 'but if you're not 100 percent sure, my client is nervous that it means you aren't interested,' " the writer explains.

"Finally, we realized what was happening: She didn't want to accept our bid even though it was the highest because she had her own candidate and didn't want to have to split her commission with our broker."

Eventually, they found a new place through an open house and dealt only with the seller's broker, who happened to be—to their great delight—a virgin. "It was her first time selling and she didn't reek of sleaziness. She said, 'Hey, if you want to hang out for a few hours, pull up a chair.' It felt comfortable and not stressful."

DON'T LET YOUR TRUE FEELINGS SHOW

When there isn't much inventory—almost all the time, in other words—it's important to make sure that when a listing comes up, your broker will show it to you first. One way to do that is not to do what a TV producer in the market for an East Village two-bedroom found himself doing at each showing: looking visibly upset. Pretty soon, he realized that with each apartment he bitched about he was reducing his chances of ultimate success. "I decided my reaction had to be enthusiastic even if I didn't like the place to keep my broker's energy up. I was afraid he'd think I wasn't serious. So I'd force myself to say something nice about each one—'Oh, yeah, I could put my desk here! I think we're *definitely* getting closer'—just so he would stay interested in me. I even let him show me five apartments in this building I knew I didn't want to live in because he'd already made the appointments."

CHEATING ISN'T WRONG—UNLESS YOU GET CAUGHT

One weekend, a gallerist decided to check out a two-bedroom on her own. When her broker called to show her the exact same place a few days later, she agreed to see it again rather than admit her indiscretion. "I felt completely guilty," she confesses.

Temptation to cheat is everywhere. There are Internet sites to peruse, friends in the market who saw something you might like. Jessica Ushan, a broker with Greenthal, even found herself cheating on her own broker when she was looking for a Westhampton summer house. "I think buyers want to stay faithful," she says. "But there's that one thing in the newspaper and they just have to call. It's like an alcoholic trying to stop."

Most brokers insist—and why wouldn't they?—that they are looking for a long-term relationship with you. "The average turnaround time in New York City is about six years," says Michael Sheinfield from Douglas Elliman, "so if I'm going to build a business, I'm going to make sure this isn't a one-transaction thing."

Some clients break into hives at the first signs of attachment. "There's that moment when they start paying for the taxis," says a journalist, shuddering at the thought. "It's a level jump. It's like you have to put out, and I don't want that kind of pressure."

Playing the field can take the pressure off. "We got involved with a broker who told me the only way she'd work with us is if we would sign her name in open houses that we'd found on the Internet," says a cosmetics executive. "She wanted a *reverse* exclusive! That's chutzpa I've never seen before. Just because I'm using her for something else doesn't mean I'm *married* to her."

SPEAK THE TRUTH—BUT GENTLY

Since representing sellers is how brokers get most of their commissions, giving a seller a presale critique is a fraught conversation. It might be something as minor as suggesting "staging" the place with votive candles or adding a fresh coat of paint. In many cases, it's even more than that. Joy Weiner at Corcoran has a client with a lizard: "It has to be fed live crickets! So he has boxes of crickets in the kitchen. It's so repulsive you can't even imagine."

Estate sellers, according to Rabbino, are the worst. "You have to tread lightly. They don't want to invest a penny to replace cracked curtains, to fix the ripped sofa. If you have the deceased's clothing hanging in the closets, this is not good. Certainly get rid of the hospital bed."

Sheinfield recently found himself in an East Side one-bedroom where the sellers "did something so horrendous it will be on the market for a year," ripping out the old kitchen and adding a new one with a metal, fuchsia, and teal color scheme. Sellers in midtown clogged their three-bedroom with oversize furniture. "I said to them as nicely as I could, 'Your stuff is great. It has nothing to do with your stuff. But you'll need to get some of the stuff out of here.' The owner took offense. They thought I was insulting their taste, and basically I was shown the door for it."

ACHIEVING FINANCIAL INTIMACY

Don't even start to look for an apartment if you're not ready to get down and dirty with your finances. "You'd sooner tell someone what your age was than what you made for a living," says Sheinfield. "It's sort of a third-rail issue. But it's the one situation where you've got to come clean."

The talking cure seems to be appropriate here. Use your broker to sound out your fears, since no one else will want to listen to you. Louise Phillips from Halstead has no problem with late-night phone calls. When clients' nerves are about to shatter, she likes to tell them about applying for her five-room co-op on West End Avenue nine years ago. "I had sold three of the board members their apartments!" she says in her exuberant Southern drawl. "So it was like, 'Okay, here you go, you're looking up my skirt now!' "

It is embarrassing to have potential neighbors judge you, but the process of financial disclosure also blows your cover in the eyes of the broker. "You want them to think that you're a good candidate, so you've been trying to make it look like you maybe have a little more money than you do, or better credit," says a handbag designer shopping for a downtown one-bedroom. "It's like you've been wearing a Miracle bra or control-top panty hose—and then you're revealed."

BREAKING UP IS HARD TO DO

When the excitement of the transaction is over and the moving vans have been called, is the relationship over, too? "You've had such an intense relationship," says Weiner. "You're thinking about this person all the time, even if there isn't a property listed; I'm thinking what kind of building I feel would be right for them. When the contract is signed, I always feel a real separation. I just called this customer today and said, *'Oh, my God! I miss you!'* "

Louise Phillips becomes such good friends with her clients, she's had four sets of them move into her apartment until their new places were ready, prompting her neighbors to dub her home "Hotel Weesy." "Two of them already had children," she notes. "One conceived their first child here."

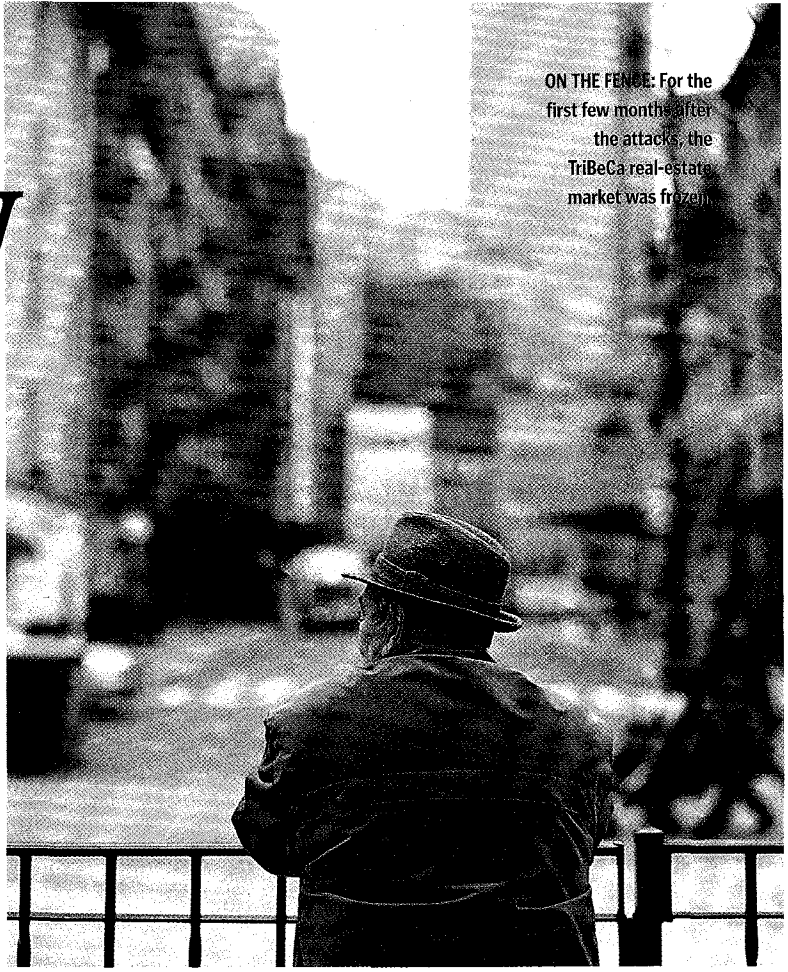
REAL ESTATE: A LOVE STORY

Broker-client romance, of course, is only a metaphor. The real-life drama is about real estate. Still, in the best situations, it can be hard to tell the difference. "I had an exclusive on Central Park West a year ago," says Terri Stone from Greenthal in a hushed voice. "I got a call, I was having an open house, this man wanted to come. I said sure. He walked in, he was a lovely man, and he seemed to be interested. We left each other, then a few days later he called and said, 'Terri, gee, I'd really love to meet you!' I said, 'I'm so glad you called! I had a feeling you were going to make an offer.' He said, 'That's not exactly what I had in mind, but I'd love to get together.'

"He gave me an address right off Central Park West, facing the planetarium, around the corner from the apartment I was showing. I went to his house, and he said, 'You know, I came to watch you work and I loved what I saw,' " she says breathlessly. " 'So, I want you to sell *this* apartment.' " It was fast and furious, she notes—"sealed bids and over the ask." ■

The View Down Here

For a few smoky months, TriBeCa's glory days as the city's most glamorous nexus of art and commerce seemed over. But downtown life is slowly returning to normal—and so are loft prices. By Robert Kolker



ON THE FENCE: For the first few months after the attacks, the TriBeCa real-estate market was frozen.

OF ALL THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE INHABITED TRIBECA IN RECENT YEARS, RUTH Hardinger and Michael Norton could be the Platonic ideal: artists who came for the lofts in the seventies (her) and eighties (him), then started selling real estate in the nineties. They are married tag-team brokers at Insignia Douglas Elliman who work only by personal referral for high-end clients, and who say, "Our business isn't like 'Let's sell a piece of *real estate.*' It's 'Let's find a home for someone who wants to share this *experience.*' " • It's the TriBeCa experience that Norton is describing—the pricey small-town loft chic that made TriBeCa the neighborhood of the last boom, and which they argue is still in full flower, months after the attacks. Their renovated loft, around the corner from their Hudson Street office, has space for both of them to make art, as well as a living. "We've built our lives so we can stay in this neighborhood," says Norton. "We feel very protective of it. We want to nurture it." Which has been less easy to do since it became the backyard of ground zero.

On a Thursday afternoon in January at Bubby's, TriBeCa's laid-back salute to Hollywood East, the Hardinger-Nortons are entertaining Jim Rhodes, a sixtyish Upper East Side father of two grown kids who, along with his wife, Jane, is thinking of starting a new life downtown. "Frankly, the Upper East Side is *nice,*" Rhodes is saying, his FDNY cap resting next to him. "It's safe. It's clean. Down here, it's different—in a very good way."

Born in Texas, Rhodes has a thing for wide-open spaces. He rails against the tyranny of the cookie-cutter co-op. He's in love with TriBeCa's "small-village atmosphere"; the way the light hits the buildings reminds him of the Marais in Paris. "It's not like just going into 1100 Park," he says, "and seeing another eight-room apartment."

Then he turns to his brokers. "You said this is where Robert De Niro hangs out?"

"Oh, yeah," Hardinger says.

THE PAST FEW YEARS—SOME SAY IT BEGAN when the world learned John Kennedy had his last breakfast at Bubby's—saw the end of TriBeCa's frontier period. Commodities, the health-food store, closed. So did the last of the refrigerated food-storage buildings that had kept TriBeCa from exploding the way SoHo had. In came something even newer—call it the Ed Burns era. "It's not that it was going to become too expensive," says Don Schuck, whose North Moore Street loft a few doors from Burns is worth many times what he paid for it in 1980. "It's that it would become like the rest of Manhattan."

Six months out from the attacks, there's a new new normal in TriBeCa—something beyond the old new normal, where everybody was wearing surgical masks. "That rallying cry to go back to normal is upsetting," says Susan Sonz, who landed a rent-stabilized loft in 1976 and never looked back. "Because we should reinvent ourselves."

TriBeCa's new new normal is a trade-off: If you're willing to look past the trauma—the immediate tragedy, the lingering uncertainty over the environment—then the TriBeCa experience endures. What's different is less tangible, more intuitive, and most certainly informed by the tragedy. "I feel like we've been through a war and back," says Jane Rosenthal of Tribeca Productions. "A year ago, it was Triburbia. We went about our business and it was only about our business. Now the Red Cross is sitting in our neighborhood."

Some changes—like the introduction of *HEPA filter* and *asbestosis* into the common

PHOTOGRAPHED BY BRIAN VELENCHENKO

lexicon—aren't so welcome. For the southern reaches of TriBeCa, the air is still Topic A—the creeping sense that the EPA hasn't been completely straight about asbestos, mercury, and other toxins. "My son goes to Stuyvesant, and his eyes are red," says Mary Salter, who used to love the way the wind swept through her Duane Street loft but now keeps those windows closed. And where the towers once stood, what you see now each night is what one neighbor calls a "blue volcano" of light—a *2001*-like stage set for the recovery and rebuilding effort.

And yet, more and more people seem willing to make the trade-off. Last August 6, Sunil and Blanca Hirani moved to Laight Street with their newborn baby. The fourth-floor, 3,300-square-foot loft, priced at about $1.5 million, had a stunning view of the World Trade Center. Blanca watched as it fell. "We were very careful not to take our daughter out," Sunil says. "We wouldn't open the windows. It was really bad the first few weeks."

Now, with most parks reopened and the lines at Nobu restored and the noisy barge on the Hudson scheduled to float away in the spring, there remains a small stigma.

WATER TRAFFIC: TriBeCa residents can't wait until the end of May, when round-the-clock loading of WTC debris onto this barge will finally end.

"We had friends over and they asked me, 'Do you worry about a decline in property value?' " Sunil says.

Still, they aren't moving. "A lot of the apartments we'd seen elsewhere were just white boxes," Sunil says. "The building is warm and cozy. You can walk to these great restaurants. On the street, you run into people you know. You can't replicate that."

THE FIRST TWO MONTHS, THE WORLD FROZE, and TriBeCa real estate froze along with it. The second two months got interesting. "People started to defrost," says Barrie Mandel, a Corcoran Group broker who lives on Harrison Street. "They came out and looked at a lot of properties. And looked and looked and looked."

And they asked questions. *When are the schools reopening? What will it take to clean the air? What's the air quality in the street? What's the air quality in the buildings? Has this building been cleaned?*

So Mandel found some studies and steered clients toward them: "I have led many people to the P.S. 234 Website, because it's a very encouraging Website. It says living here is analogous to living in any urban area."

One prospective buyer, a young married man from SoHo, was poised to buy in at the Atalanta, the seventeen-story former cold-storage warehouse on North Moore Street turned towering loft space with startling downtown views. "I saw he was hesitating," remembers Mandel. "I said, 'Why don't you tell me what's really going on?' "

"I can accept that the air quality looks good now," the man told her. "And I can see the studies are done by independent companies. But there's no way of knowing what could happen down the road."

And that was the end of him. "He was talking about a vague, amorphous thing," Mandel says now. "And even I'm not grandiose enough to think I could answer that."

Finally, Mandel is seeing people actually write checks again. "I really had nothing until eight weeks ago," Mandel says. Now she has five resale properties and six new properties in or almost in contract. "Yesterday, nobody asked me about the air," she says. "I'd say in the last week or two, it hasn't been a question."

Are there bargains? Prices have rolled back—but not nearly as much as the doomsayers would have you think. The Corcoran Group reports that its TriBeCa sales last summer averaged $598 per square foot, then fell 11.5 percent to $530 after the attack, and since November have floated back up to $562—so they're still off from last year by about 6 percent.

Not all of TriBeCa is created equal. There comes a point as you walk north that you can start ignoring the disaster, and a point to the south where you're still living it, reading up on the latest toxicology reports, wondering about the air. Some see North Moore Street, the area around Bubby's, as a sort of north-south demarcation; others put the line at Chambers, about where the landmarked district ends.

But of all the divisions, the greatest is downtown versus uptown. "People uptown are probably less inclined to talk about it," says Don Schuck. "People in TriBeCa, the conversation either starts or ends with something 9/11-related. It is really a part of our mantra."

"I'VE LOVED THIS NEIGHBORHOOD AT EVERY stage," says a smiling Susan Sonz. "Even the rich, fancy stage."

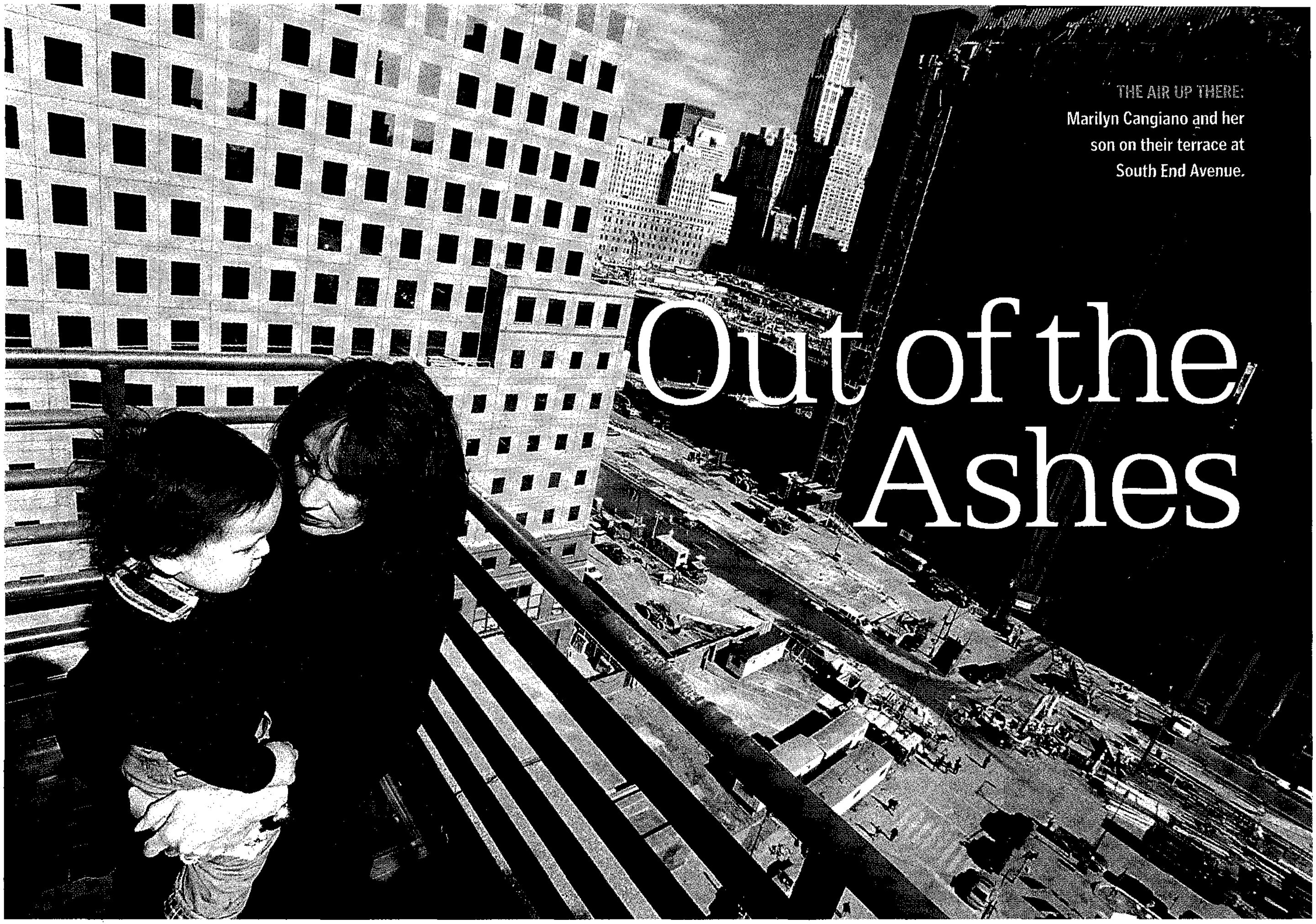
If TriBeCa's story has always been one of change, this new chapter feels a bit like a time warp. Sonz's 8-year-old son watched as people leaped out of the Trade towers. Months later, over coffee at Bubby's, she points out the window at the Issey Miyake store across the street, which opened shortly after the 11th, calling it a remnant of the past boom. "In many ways, for better or for worse, this is a step back in time," she says. "It was gonna happen sooner or later—it just happened faster. I mean, how many $3 million lofts can you sell?"

I ask her if she feels like she's gotten her neighborhood back. Her eye twitches.

"Let me say this about the event: I don't think we're ever going to recover from it," she says. "Because the thing we never talk about is that so many people *died* here. The grief is here. I've lived here practically all my life, and I considered leaving. And sometimes I think I should have. I think about it all the time."

Ron Crismon, Bubby's owner, stops by Sonz's booth. He opened the Saturday after the attack to serve pancakes. In January, he was still having nightmares. "How are you?" he says.

"Well," she says with a laugh, "I guess we all know things could be worse." ■



THE AIR UP THERE: Marilyn Cangiano and her son on their terrace at South End Avenue.

Out of the Ashes

Deep rent discounts and government grants are drawing a new generation of tenants to Battery Park City. But there are still almost 2,000 apartments available. By Sarah Bernard

TWO YEARS AGO, AFTER RAISING TWO KIDS ON 74TH STREET AND WEST END AVenue, Rona Smith and her husband rented a two-bedroom at the northern tip of Battery Park City. Now they are not sure whether to move again. “We have so much of that gray dust all the time,” says Smith. “This was the least dusty apartment ever. All of our windows face the river. Suddenly, every day you can see dust on top of the TV, the headboard. But it’s a hard decision for us. We know why we moved downtown. We know we don’t want to move back uptown. I don’t think there’s another neighborhood that appeals to us more.”

The outlook for Battery Park City had never looked better than on September 10. Rockrose had just finished leasing the last of 324 units in 22 River Terrace, its second well-appointed rental near Chambers Street. On the north end, the first of three so-called “green” buildings was taking shape. The tony Ritz-Carlton Hotel and Residences was about to open across from the Museum of Jewish Heritage’s pagoda. Of its 113 apartments, which range from $680,000 one-bedrooms to $6,350,000 penthouses, 77 sold even before the Viking stoves were installed. Residents likened its arrival, complete with limo-friendly ramps and a fourteenth-floor bar-restaurant overlooking the water, to Central Park South getting the Plaza.

The next day, 6,000 of the neighborhood’s 9,000 residents fled for their lives. And the urban-renewal success story seemed doomed. “Initially, you grieve for the loss of lives, then you grieve for the people who were related to those people, but now I have a tremendous amount of grief about my neighborhood,” says Marti Ann Cohen-Wolf, a member of the Battery Park City Community Board and a twenty-year resident of Gateway Plaza, the apartment complex closest to ground zero, which had plane parts lodged in one of its buildings. “There are fourteen apartments on my floor,” she says. “Only six of them are occupied.” At the moment, 70 percent of the neighborhood’s 6,400 units are occupied, which leaves almost 2,000 available apartments.

ALMOST SIX MONTHS INTO THE RECOVERY process, the return to normalcy has been quicker than even the most optimistic neighborhood booster ever expected. The Battery Park City Authority has already resurfaced the basketball courts in Rockefeller Park. The baseball and soccer fields are next. Teardrop Park, the one-and-a-half-acre green space in front of 22 River Terrace, which has been colonized by Verizon trucks for the past five months, will be landscaped in April. The Irish Hunger

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARK JENKINSON

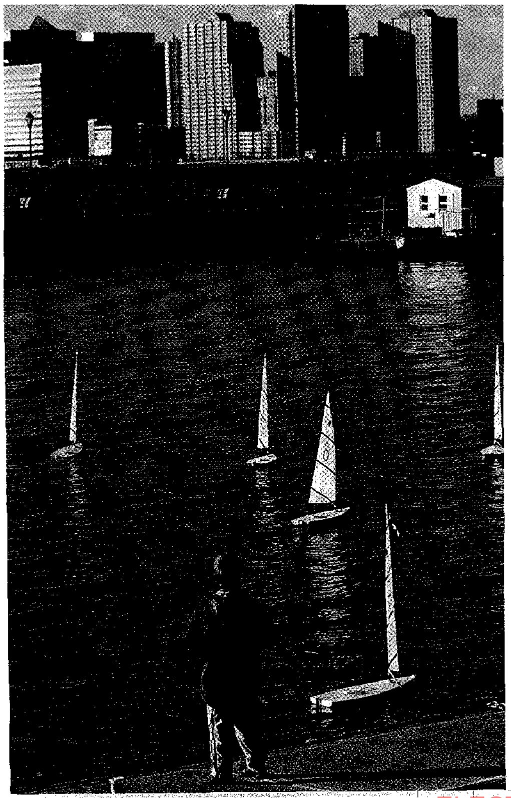
Memorial will be completed in July. A free shuttle bus that runs from the north end to the south end will keep carrying passengers for as long as necessary.

As a result, not only has there not been panic selling, says Stribling's Catherine Douthett, a ten-year resident of the neighborhood who has been selling there for five years, but "in a weird way, what happened put Battery Park City on the map."

"Even people in Europe have heard of Battery Park City now," concurs Marilyn Cangiano, who was traveling in Italy with her husband and 1-year-old son on September 11. In August, the Cangianos had made the tough decision to buy a house on Staten Island after seven and a half years in the neighborhood and sell their two-bedroom penthouse on South End Avenue. After the tragedy, the buyer on their apartment pulled out, and it was slow going in the fall. "But I've seen a difference in the last two weeks," she notes. "People are legitimately looking."

"My brokers have gotten several requests to go down there," says Ruth McCoy from Brown Harris Stevens. "I ask why, and they say, 'People want views of the river, they like the feeling down there.' They're looking at half-a-million-dollar, three-quarters-of-a-million-dollar properties. You get some people who think they're going to get a deal. It may be a little cheaper, but it's not drastically cheaper. When brokers try to find things, they are all in contract."

SMOOTH SAILING: After many difficult months, Battery Park City is finally returning to normal.



The rental market is another story. Open houses are now filled with twentysomethings looking for bargains and families reconsidering whether they need to move to Pelham just yet. "In our building, the average age has gone down from 35 to 21," says Patricia Falvo, who lives in 22 River Terrace with her husband and new baby. "They're taking three-bedrooms, putting up a wall to make a fourth. In the laundry room the other day, this sorority girl rolled her eyes at me because I filled four washing machines with baby clothes and there were none for her. I feel like an old coot."

Much-publicized financial incentives are also having the desired effect. "There's been stimulus," says Timothy Carey, president of the Battery Park City Authority, referring to the $15.6 million available for pre–September 11 residents and those who move to the area before July. The grants will break down to approximately $1,850 apiece for tenants. On top of that, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation recently announced that residents, both old and new, below Chambers Street and west of Broadway would be eligible for up to $12,000 if they make a two-year commitment to the neighborhood.

And yet a great many vacancies remain, as banners hanging down the sides of buildings throughout the complex announce. Landlords have lowered rents by as much as 20 to 25 percent. "I know a girl who was paying $1,600 a month for a very small place in Hoboken," says Michael Brescia, who owns a two-bedroom on Rector Place. "And now for $1,650 she has a place twice as big on a two-year lease, with one month free each year. Another couple I know, both lawyers, have two kids, and they're staying. They renegotiated their leases and for a little increase in rent got the apartment next door and knocked down the wall."

Brescia, a pulmonary critical-care doctor with a practice in New Jersey, has lived in the area for five years and is intent on staying put, even though what drew him here in the first place was the fifteen-minute commute. Until West Street reopens, he has to rise 40 minutes earlier to drive up the FDR to Houston Street, then across to Varick Street and the Holland Tunnel. "People think I'm crazy," he admits. "But it's important for the city and the country to make sure this area comes back. It may be beautiful. We may all find ourselves living next to the Jefferson Memorial. It may be magnificent."

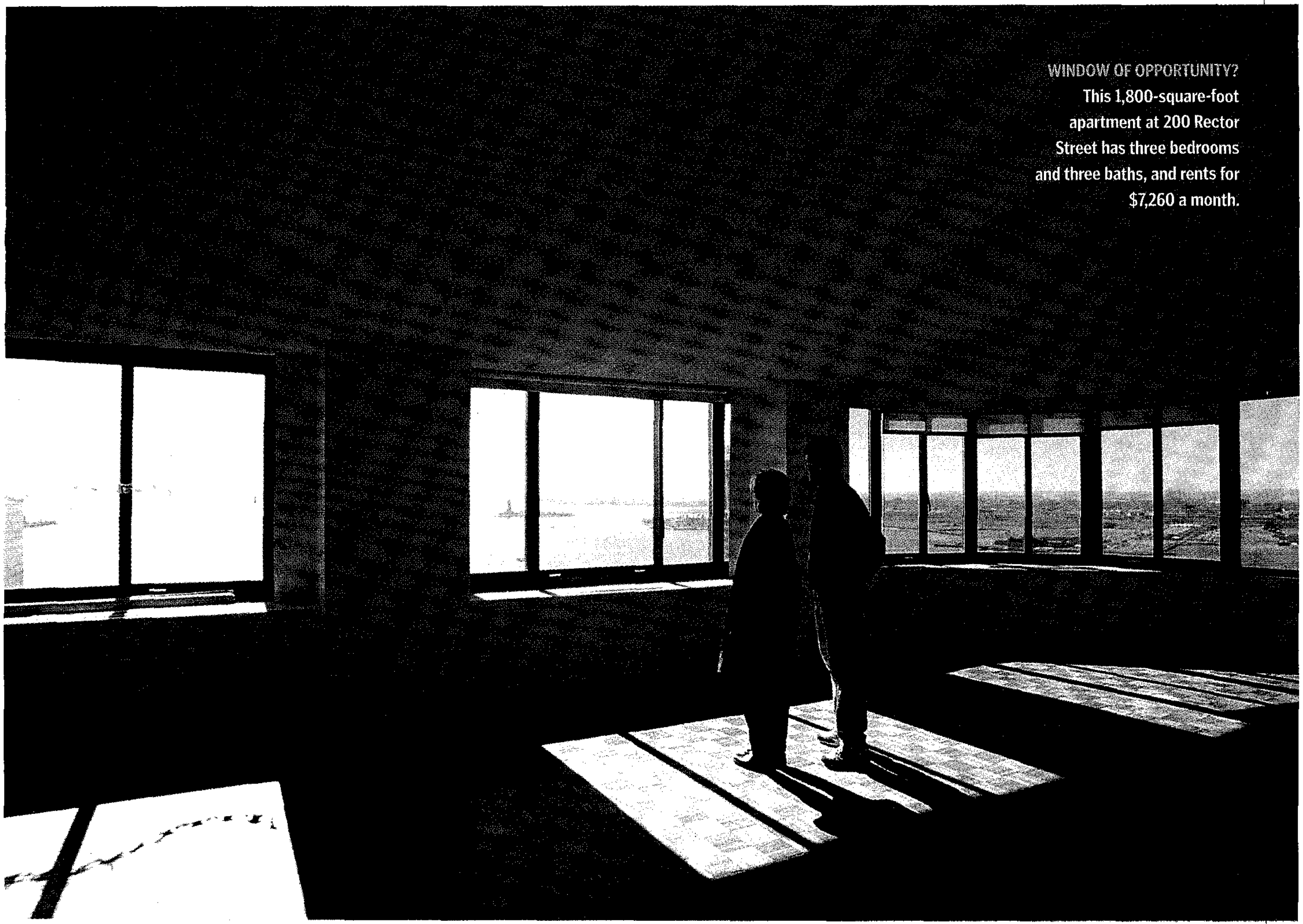
JEFF SHAPIRO'S MOVE INTO THE TONY RITZ-Carlton was in the works long before September 11. Unlike many of his friends who moved to the neighborhood when they became parents, he has lived in Battery Park for seven years and on its outskirts for twenty. He met his wife here—she lived in Liberty Terrace when he lived on Nassau Street. Their first date was at Florent, in the meatpacking district, "because there was no place around here to eat," he notes. Since September 11, he has seen many of his friends head for Westchester, Long Island, even the Upper West Side. But his kids go fishing on the piers; his wife runs on the esplanade every morning. "It's nice," he says, pointing to the floor-to-ceiling windows in his new living room. A fleet of ferry boats is passing by. "Even Jersey City's starting to get a skyline."

From his bedroom he can see the Statue of Liberty. The view from his youngest son's room, however, has the bulldozers of ground zero front and center. "It's sort of weird seeing the pedestrian bridge," he says of the still-standing white structure that used to have an escalator down to Liberty Street. "The bridge to nowhere."

A new pedestrian bridge across West Street is in the works. The original plan had it stretching above the only patch of active play space in the south end. Residents complained, and the Authority shifted its trajectory. This kind of fierce community spirit reminds Cohen-Wolf of the pioneering days when Battery Park City first opened. "It was so exciting, we were building a neighborhood. Nothing else was here. No grocery stores. The dry cleaner put in a small refrigerator case with milk and orange juice so when you ran out you could get it. But you went elsewhere for everything. In some ways, when we first moved back, it felt like that was happening all over again," she says, sighing. "And it felt like we were fighting all these battles all over again."

"People here are proactive," says Paige McCollum, manager of the Video Room, one of the first businesses to reopen after the tragedy. Residents immediately covered the store's long counter with stacks of petitions for another fire station and better transportation. "It doesn't seem like anyone in this community is rolling over." They are, however, moving on, as McCollum can sense from the kinds of videos her clients rent. *The Siege,* once popular, doesn't go out as much. Her list of suggested mindless comedies is not consulted as often.

"We're still getting movies back from before September 11," she says. "People come in and say, 'I have this video, it's a little late.' We bring up the charges and it's like $500! But we're just charging people for one night," she adds, "like it never happened." ■



WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY? This 1,800-square-foot apartment at 200 Rector Street has three bedrooms and three baths, and rents for $7,260 a month.

Where to Buy (or Rent) Now

BACK IN THE NINETIES—REMEMBER THOSE DAYS?—THE market was easy to understand: All it did was go up. Now things are more complicated. September 11 and the recession produced some bargains in Battery Park City, of course, as well as in rentals. And if you've got, say, $10 million to throw around, you'll find an abundance of choices. But in most parts of the city, for every bargain there are two or three bargain hunters armed with Alan Greenspan–assisted mortgage rates. Especially on the Upper West Side, where everybody seems to be looking to buy, and nobody to sell. If it's a one-bedroom you want, you'll find good value in Yorkville, east of Lex. Need a townhouse for a growing family? Murray Hill is the place. A loft? North Chelsea is still affordable. On the following pages, you'll find a road map to this confusing real-estate terrain, broken down by category, from studio apartment to townhouse, to target the best neighborhoods for what you need. And don't be dismayed by the lack of bargains—it means people have confidence in the city again. Which is a good thing.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK JENKINSON.

Studios

Thanks to low interest rates, studio dwellers are finding that it still makes sense to own. To find a room of your own, focus your search on Yorkville, Murray Hill, or Brooklyn.

During the last recession, the studio market took it on the chin, hard. "It's overstating it to say you couldn't give them away, but only a little," says Frederick W. Peters of Ashforth Warburg. This time around, it's the exact opposite. "Weakness in rentals is pervasive," says Neil Binder, a principal at Bellmarc. "And usually when rentals go down, sales go down, but you're not seeing that." Prices have stabilized, but low interest rates have cut the cost of a monthly mortgage payment. Which means buying a studio is often still cheaper than renting.

Michael Bellino couldn't agree more. The MTV promos producer spent three years in an increasingly expensive Carroll Gardens share before purchasing his gut-renovated, prewar 400-square-foot co-op at 93rd and Columbus. "If you're buying," says the 27-year-old, "a whole world of apartments open up."

THE PRICE IS RIGHT: Yorkville is the consensus among buyers and brokers. "It wasn't my first choice," says David Chase, a 30-year-old attorney, "but there's better value there than the Upper West Side or the downtown neighborhoods." He bought the fourth place that Fox's Marcia Donen Roma showed him, a 475-square-foot studio in the mid-Seventies off Third, with a well-appointed kitchen, plenty of storage, and a spacious bathroom. The selection here is broader, and $175,000 can get you a nice studio in a full-service building, says Wendy Divak of Charles H. Greenthal.

THE NUMBERS:

Yorkville	$135K-$250K
Upper East Side	$250K-$400K
Murray Hill	$140K-$300K
Gramercy	$175K-$350K
Upper West Side	$170K-$400K
Hudson Heights/Inwood	$90K-$225K
Clinton	$165K-$300K
Chelsea	$179K-$350K
Greenwich Village	$165K-$375K
East Village	$150-$350K
Brooklyn Heights	$100K-$130K
Fort Greene/Clinton Hill	$85K-$120K
Park Slope	$90K-$115K

FARTHER AFIELD: Murray Hill, to the south, also holds promise. James Proscia, 52, a software engineer at Verizon, went to contract on a 400-square-foot studio at 35th and Second for an astounding $115,000. "My preference has always been the Village," he says, "but when you're set in a price range, you have to be versatile." Gramercy is another option, or if you're thinking west, Hell's Kitchen, advises Binder. Within these neighborhoods, for "average dimensions, nothing spectacular," he estimates studios in walk-ups cost around $175,000; sixties-era white-brick boxes run in the $250,000 range, and apartments in new high-rises can fetch upwards of $350,000. For consistently lower prices, look north of the George Washington Bridge to Hudson Heights or out to brownstone Brooklyn, where you'll make up in savings what you lose in convenience.

Evan Binkley of Corcoran helped Kristina Lifors, 25, land a 477-square-foot Brooklyn Heights co-op (pictured) for $125,000. After two years of renting in Bay Ridge, Lifors wanted a shorter commute to her interior-design job in Manhattan. Her studio had been on the market for two weeks, with seven competing offers. "It was the second place I'd seen," she says. "I was afraid I was going to lose it." But thanks to some assistance from Dad, and an eager seller, Lifors secured the St. George Tower property, which features a full-time doorman, a renovated kitchen and bath, and a rooftop deck. "It's amazing," she says. "You can see the whole city."

OVER THE ASK: Unless you head into the Nineties, like Bellino, forget the Upper West Side. "Studios on the West Side are sparse. It's predominantly larger properties," says Binder. So you might find bigger studios, like the 600-square-foot apartments in Lincoln Towers (West End Avenue, 65th to 71st Street), but they'll be priced around $230,000. "Generally, for a renovated studio, it's not less than $170,000," says Halstead's Jill Sloane. "If you find something less than that, it's either in original condition or it's really, really tiny."

THE OUTLOOK: Binkley points to one client who paid $40,000 for her Brooklyn Heights studio three and a half years ago and sold it for three times that late last year. "Nobody's going to triple their value in the three years. But I don't see anybody losing out big-time, either. Compared with all the other investment opportunities you have at the moment, it's still a pretty safe one." DEBORAH SHAPIRO

ROOM WITH A VIEW: Kristina Lifors paid $125,000 for this 477-square-foot co-op on Hicks Street in Brooklyn Heights.

One-Bedrooms

One-bedroom co-ops predominate on the Upper East Side, especially east of Lexington—so why are you still looking on West End Avenue?

It was the first-time investors, not the Warren Buffetts, who took the stock market out of the last recession, and it may be the common man—the erstwhile renter—who does the same for post-bubble real estate. "In early 2000, there were multi-million-dollar properties selling every day at a new record price," says Insignia Douglas Elliman's Tristan Harper. Though he's just broken a post–September 11 sales record with an $18.25 million Park Avenue condo, Harper credits a humbler clientele for the resiliency of Manhattan prices. "After September 11, the first-time buyers were the ones who were basically holding the market," he says.

Higher demand in January buoyed prices, and cautious one-bedroom owners—those who haven't fled the city already—aren't going anywhere. "Sellers are not desperate," says Corcoran's Christine Iu. "They know that if they hold out, they will get their price." Ken Altman lowered the asking on his Yorkville one-bedroom (on the market since late August) from $325,000 to just under $300,000, but he'll go no further. It's still on the market, and bids are still coming in just below ask. "I checked what other full-service apartments are going for in my area," he says. "I'm confident that we are where we should be in the marketplace."

THE NUMBERS:

Yorkville	$250K–$400K
Upper East Side	$300K–$800K
Murray Hill	$240K–$650K
Upper West Side	$350K–$800K
Hudson Heights/Inwood	$150K–$300K
Chelsea	$330K–$650K
West Village	$300K–$700K
East Village	$300K–$500K
Fort Greene/Clinton Hill	$125K–$165K
Brooklyn Heights	$200K–$250K
Park Slope	$190K–$235K

OVER THE ASK: Whatever the neighborhood, the rarest inventory is always the priciest. Below 125th Street, prewar one-bedrooms are prized and rarely for sale. From the Bing & Bing stalwarts in the West Village all the way up to West End Avenue in the 100s, inventory is scarce and bidding wars are par for the course—particularly on the Upper West Side. Reversing the East-West divide of a decade ago, space here can sell for 15 percent more than the going rate east of Lex. "Some of my agents are losing buyers to the East Side," says Jeffrey Rothstein, the head of Douglas Elliman's West Side office. "Normally, they would buy in the West, but they've gotten outpriced."

TURNING A CORNER: Lauren Michaels paid $400,000 for this 1,000-square-foot Murray Hill one-bedroom in November.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT: For more options, follow the inventory, all the way to the Upper East Side east of Lexington—with abundant postwar residential space where one-bedrooms predominate (proportionately more than in any other neighborhood, according to Elliman's Harper). That's what Edmund Cape did. The week of September 11, the 32-year-old McKinsey consultant was set to close on a $320,000 Grand Street two-bedroom with a full view of the Twin Towers, but the seller refused to renegotiate. "I was initially upset, of course," says Cape. "But when I started looking around, there was clearly softening all over." He still had to fight off two other bids—both below asking—on a large one-bedroom fifth-floor walkup in Yorkville that he snagged for $279,000.

FARTHER AFIELD: Newly gentrified neighborhoods—the East Village, Hudson Heights, Fort Greene, and Clinton Hill—are still the least inflated. The average Clinton Hill one-bedroom went for $148,000 last fall, according to Corcoran. And a couple of brokers, asked where they'd personally invest, name Hudson Heights, a section of Washington Heights bounded by 174th Street and Fort Tryon Park where thrifty couples like Michael Poehlman and Stephanie Nobert have been able to find spacious prewar one-bedrooms for less than $200,000. "We knew we wanted to be in this neighborhood," says Nobert, who had been renting in a Williamsburg rowhouse. "We wanted a more permanent structure."

THE NEST-EGG EFFECT: "There is a wealth factor that we did not experience in the last recession," says Corcoran's Cathy Blau, who sees a lot of savings in buyers' financial papers. Lauren Michaels, an associate publisher at *Harper's Bazaar*, didn't exactly find a steal in her $400,000 Murray Hill pad (pictured) with $1,800 monthly maintenance. Michaels knew what she wanted and had the financial security to get it (at $25,000 below asking). "I've been looking for a year, on and off," she says. "The more I looked, the more I felt that everything was overpriced." Eventually—as prices dipped—Michaels found everything she wanted (doorman, wraparound terrace, large den) and had enough left over for a decorator. "It's just so perfect for me," says Michaels. "Immediately, I'd started wondering what I could do with it." BORIS KACHKA

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ERIC MCNATT

Two-Bedrooms

The two-bedroom co-op is still the white whale for newlyweds and young families. To land one for yourself, look to postwar towers in the far East Nineties.

Bagging the bona fide two-bedroom—a midsize family home that falls between a converted one-bedroom and a classic six—is as difficult as ever. Even during last fall's standstill, twos continued to sell easily. In large part, that's because buyers looking to upgrade to a second bedroom are usually doing so not by choice but because they have to: A baby's on the way or just arrived, or they've otherwise outgrown their current digs.

In October, Joyce Davis, a Manhattan dermatologist, and her husband, a cardiac surgeon, signed a contract on a 2,000-square-foot, fully renovated condo on Third Avenue in the Sixties for $1.8 million. "It seemed very strange. They had just found anthrax, and here I was buying an expensive apartment," says Davis. But the high-floor condo was exactly what these doctors ordered: It was in move-in condition, with huge closets and floor-to-ceiling views of the park and the 59th Street Bridge. "I was living in a lovely one-bedroom in Gramercy Park, so we wanted something that was worth the effort of moving," says Davis, who especially needed more living space for her 12-year-old stepson on the weekends.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT: The best place to look for a two-bedroom is around First and East End Avenues in the Nineties. "I sold six 900-square-foot apartments in two weeks last January," says Insignia Douglas Elliman's Tristan Harper, whose deals all went to contract for $350,000 at 300 East 95th Street. "We priced them for the market," he says. While people often think of the East Nineties as a rental neighborhood, newer developments like the Waterford and the Chartwell House are luring home-buyers in the neighborhood.

Luca Marcato, chef-owner of Luca, a Northern Italian restaurant near Gracie Mansion, purchased an 1,100-square-foot condo for the asking price, $665,000, at the Chartwell House, on Second Avenue near 91st Street. "I couldn't find anything at a reasonable price," says Marcato. But the condo has lots of light—a real plus for Marcato, his wife, and his 6-year-old son, who had lived in a dim rental for the past eight years. Its new construction, ten-year tax abatement, and proximity to the restaurant persuaded Marcato to sign fast, closing two years ago, before the building was complete. They moved in last November.

FAMILY STYLE: Luca Marcato's sunny 1,100-square-foot two-bedroom condo, purchased for $665,000 at the Chartwell House on Second Avenue, near 91st Street.

THE NUMBERS:

Upper East Side	$600K-$1.5M
Yorkville	$400K-$800K
Upper West Side	$700K-$1.5M
East Village	$500K-$1M
Chelsea	$550K-$1.3M
Gramercy Park	$500K-$1.2M
Murray Hill	$450K-$1M
Greenwich Village	$600K-$1.5M
Hell's Kitchen	$400K-$800K
Brooklyn Heights	$350K-$650K
Park Slope	$300K-$500K
Fort Greene/Clinton Hill	$200K-$300K

FARTHER AFIELD: You can still find a reasonable two-bedroom in Hell's Kitchen—or Clinton, as brokers now like to call it. Apartments in 24-hour-security buildings range from $625,000 to $800,000 but can almost certainly run about 25 percent less in older, non-doorman properties. "If you're talking about one of the converted co-op buildings or some of those residential hotels for actors, the price is probably a third less than that," says William B. May's Robert Clepper. Many displaced Battery Park City residents have relocated here recently. "It's a great location because it's still easy for them to get to work," says Clepper.

OVER THE ASK: Upper West Side brokers have only one thing to say: Don't even ask about discounts. "There is no best bet. There are no deals here," says MLBKaye International's Warren Pearl. "A slightly weaker neighborhood would be below 14th Street, maybe a 5 percent decrease. But people who are looking for bargains aren't looking for 5 percent; they're looking for 20 and 25 percent, and those are not available," says Pearl. Prices for prewar 1,400-square-foot co-ops that range from $800,000 to $1.3 million on avenues excluding Central Park West and Riverside Drive (where the numbers climb into the $4 million range) haven't budged since last year.

DOWNTOWN: Traditionally, two-bedrooms are smaller, scarcer, and more expensive in lower Manhattan. If you're lucky enough to find a 1,000-square-foot two-bedroom in, say, Chelsea or the Village, be prepared to pay top dollar. "If there's a reduction in price at all, it's not a reduction but people desperate to sell," says Charles H. Greenthal's Lew Lydiard. JOY ARMSTRONG

Classic Sixes

The basic family apartment isn't so basic these days: Especially on the West Side, they're tougher to get than a private-school spot. And a whole lot more expensive.

Your first obstacle to buying a classic six or seven may be finding one; your second is sure to be sticker shock. Classic sixes (traditional prewar arrangements of two bedrooms, a kitchen, a living room, a formal dining room, and the now archaic "maid's room") and sevens (the same, plus a third bedroom) are among the most coveted, least available properties in New York. "There's basically nothing out there," Corcoran's Deanna Kory says with a sigh. "Nothing good, anyway."

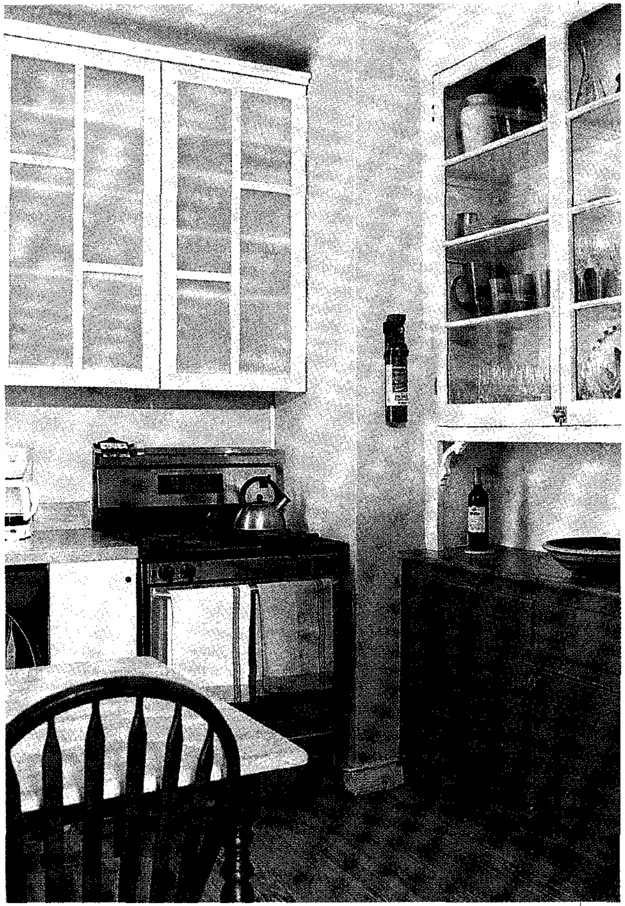
One beleaguered Upper West Sider who's been searching since early fall notes, "I'm just not seeing much, and everything I do see seems to have something seriously wrong with it." Wendy J. Sarasohn, also of Corcoran, has heard it all before: "We've got 31 prewar sevens on the Upper East Side for under $3 million. Out of these, maybe two are decent." Plus, there's plenty of competition for what is available. Stribling's Marcy Grau reports, "Our brokers have been swamped. At one open house, they couldn't fit all the people into the apartment."

THE NUMBERS:

Classic Sixes	
Upper East/West	$1.3M–$1.8M
CPW/Fifth Avenue	$2M–$5M
Park Slope	$600K–$700K
Classic Sevens	
Upper East/West	$1.7M–$2.5M
CPW/Fifth Avenue	$3M–$5M
Park Slope	$700K–$1.3M

FREE-MARKET BLUES: "Many buyers are under the impression that prices are a good 10 percent lower across the board. On a sought-after apartment, they're not," says Richard Ferrari, a broker at Douglas Elliman. Most Realtors say, however, that the recession has taken the edge off the rampant overpricing and competitive overbidding that defined the boom. "You don't feel the compulsion to stand in the apartment while you put in your offer for over the asking price," says Ashforth Warburg's Harriet Kaufman. But other brokers insist that the market for these apartments hasn't changed a bit. "Prices are *way* up," says Sarasohn. "It's back to what it was like two years ago, at the top. And it's even more frenzied, because we have more people competing for apartments."

THE PRICE IS RIGHT: If you're determined to live on the Upper West or Upper East Side, stay away from the avenues. "Maybe in a non-doorman building on not a great side street, you could get something for $995,000," Grau acknowledges. Ferrari estimates that a 1,500-square-foot apartment on a side street might be had for $1.1 million—"if there was one available." British couple Sarah Barratt Ball and Christopher Ball, working with Corcoran's Sarasohn, found the holy grail of classic sixes—a condo—in the low Eighties between Amsterdam and Broadway (pictured), for an unheard-of $890,000. The price was partly a reflection of the post-attack market softening (the owners dropped their price $100,000 in September), but even the original asking price of $1 million was pretty low. "It's wonderful, really high up, so there's plenty of light, and there's lots of space," raves the delighted Sarah. The place did need some TLC—"It was in a state of benign neglect," Sarah says—and that, many brokers say, can be a deal-breaker these days. Christopher is taking time off to do much of the renovation work himself.



COOKING WITH CLASS: The Balls are renovating the Upper West Side classic six they bought last fall for $890,000.

FARTHER AFIELD: The picture improves dramatically if you look in Brooklyn: Corcoran's Patricia A. Neinast estimates that a good classic six in Park Slope can be had for $650,000 to $700,000; a seven will put you in the $800,000 range, and even those in the best white-glove parkside buildings top out at $1.3 million. In Prospect Heights, prices are even better: Neinast recently sold a 1,900-square-foot classic seven with views of Grand Army Plaza for $659,000. Like most of Neinast's clients, the buyers were from Manhattan. "In a lot of ways, Park Slope is very similar to the Upper West Side," she notes. "It's very family-friendly." The catch? Inventory is at least as low in Park Slope as it is on the Upper West Side. "It can take months for a new classic six or seven to come on the market," she reports.

OVER THE ASK: Inventory's low and prices are highest on Central Park West. "The sky's the limit there," says Grau. "Many buyers don't even want to look there once they see the prices. It's a whole different market." And that's if you can find one at all.

THE OUTLOOK: Most brokers don't expect the market for family-size apartments to improve anytime soon. "I'm hoping for changes," says Ferrari. "I'm hoping more inventory will come on the market this spring and summer. But I'm not counting on it."

EMILY GITTER

Lofts

Raw space is out; warm, bright homes are in; and the flower district is blossoming. But if you think you'll catch a recession special downtown, you've already been outbid.

"My living room is 60 feet by 40 feet. Once I get in there, I can't wait to put on my Rollerblades," says a delighted Paul Gregrey of the 3,000-square-foot North Chelsea loft he bought this fall for $1.1 million. A 42-year-old sales exec for Westwood One, he's a far cry from the pioneering artists who turned loft living into a fantasy lifestyle two decades ago, but now he's living that dream—and it took a disaster to get him there. "A lot of young people made an awful lot of money in the late nineties and spent freely on housing," says Judith Thorn of Ashforth Warburg. "They found the glamour of lofts appealing." But as the recession settled in last year, "anything over $2 million suffered," Tricia Hayes Cole of Corcoran says. "Everyone was scaling back. They didn't need the luxury of a huge loft—it was about practicality instead of extravagance." And then came September 11.

TEMPORARY SETBACK: When the downtown market seized up in the wake of the attack, a handful of loft shoppers—like Gregrey—dived in and came up with pearls. But those deals are disappearing fast. Prices are rising for lofts everywhere, even within breathing distance of ground zero. The rewards went to those who moved fast, like clothing designer Dina Zavalia. A week after the September attacks, Zavalia and her husband stumbled upon their dream home after two years of touring crummy, dark spaces. William B. May's Margery Hadar showed them the 3,000-square-foot loft in TriBeCa while it was still smoky from the disaster. "I felt asthmatic," Zavalia says. "Every time I would see it, I would get a migraine that night. But it was so pretty!" She snagged the apartment for $1.5 million ($508 per square foot).

THE PRICE IS RIGHT: North Chelsea (the flower district, newly renamed Chelsea Heights) has for decades been the place for wholesale foliage; now it's becoming a place to put down roots. "Some people think I'm crazy moving into this neighborhood because they don't see what it's going to be in three years," Gregrey says. Gourmet groceries and pharmacies and laundromats are popping up between old factories—it's like SoHo in 1979, or the Flatiron district in 1989. "This area represents the value that NoHo did ten years ago, when SoHo was trendy," William B. May's Edward Ferris says. Average prices in the area are as low as you can go in the Manhattan loft market: $400 to $550 per square foot, compared with TriBeCa's $600 to $750. But there are trade-offs—notably, a shortage of good public schools. "TriBeCa's had more young people coming in, more families, more children's clothing stores, more nursery schools," says Susan Penzner of Susan Penzner Real Estate. Kids in the flower district attend the less desirable P.S. 33, which scores below the state average on standardized tests. The area also has more traffic than TriBeCa and SoHo, and lacks landmark-district status.

LOFTY AMBITIONS: The smoke has cleared from the Broadway loft that Dina Zavalia bought for $1.5 million in September.

FARTHER AFIELD: Next up in the development pipeline is North Brooklyn. Amid the artists and musicians renting in the industrial sprawl, condos are sprouting. Williamsburg Mews was the first of two developments on the market (with three more to come), and is selling out loftlike apartments at $400 per square foot. "Brokers thought people would only move here to rent," says Helene Luchnick of Insignia Douglas Elliman, which represents the development. "We're proving them wrong." Ditto for DUMBO's fledgling sales market, where the success of David Walentas's Clock Tower lofts have inspired plans for copycat condos.

THE NUMBERS:

TriBeCa	$600–$750 per sq. ft.
West Village	$650–$800
SoHo	$650–$800
Flatiron	$650–$800
Chelsea	$600–$700
North Chelsea	$400–$550
East Village/Lower East Side	$400–$500
Williamsburg	$400–$500
South Brooklyn	$425–$600

IT'S A MALL WORLD AFTER ALL: SoHo may have originated the loft trend, but in the minds of many buyers, its glory days are over. "On weekends, it's mobbed—it's like an outdoor mall," complains Noel Kirnon, who scoured downtown for three years before he found a penthouse on Duane Park in November. The West Village matches TriBeCa's quieter, neighborhood feel, but it has fewer old-style conversions. New developments—usually luxury buildings—are more expensive: The Village's new Richard Meier–designed glass towers sold nearly all of their loftlike raw space for $1,000 to $1,800 per square foot. And that was before the building went up.

THINK OUTSIDE THE WHITE BOX: Meier's towers notwithstanding, buyers have been much less willing to renovate than they were in 2000, when finding a contractor was like getting a seat on the 6 train at rush hour. "The tide has turned from the last two years, when developers would get equal prices for unfinished space," Luchnick says. "People don't want to deal with that anymore." MONICA KHEMSUROV

Luxury Apartments

Park and Fifth may be attracting a new generation of buyers, but downtown neighborhoods like TriBeCa and Chelsea still offer a wider range of posh choices.

Miramax co-chairman Bob Weinstein first put his 3,000-square-foot condo on the thirty-ninth floor of the Bristol Plaza for sale at the end of 1999, asking $4.24 million. Last month, after more than two years on the market, the three-bedroom with floor-to-ceiling windows and a library finally went to contract for $4.2 million. That same week, another unit in the building, which had been on the market for months, sold for $3.85 million. After languishing for over a year, the luxury market is beginning to show signs of life.

Much less sensitive to lower interest rates (most pay cash, don’t you know), the city’s wealthy were the last to jump back into the market. Since January, though, the market has rebounded and brokers are now complaining about the lack of inventory. While not up to the “pay anything” levels of the market’s peak, prices are solid and may even be rising. The universe of ultra-luxe apartments is tiny, so once a few places sell—like the four prewar co-ops on the Upper East Side ranging from $5 million to $7 million that sold in the first two weeks of February—not a lot comes in to pick up the slack. There’s even been a return of bidding wars. Alexa Lambert of Stribling reports that she had a back-and-forth battle between two couples for a $7.3 million co-op on the Upper East Side last month that cost the winner more than half a million.

SCREEN DREAM: Brenda and Gene DeRose paid $3.25 million for this 3,000-square-foot, four-bedroom penthouse atop the Fischer Mills building in West TriBeCa in July.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT: There is still more room for negotiation downtown than uptown. Brenda and Gene DeRose moved into their $3.25 million, four-bedroom penthouse (pictured) atop the Fischer Mills conversion in West TriBeCa last July. Wanting a bigger place for their second child, they’ve customized the 3,000-square-foot interior to be more kid-friendly—including converting a breakfast bar to a kitchen playroom and putting a sandbox on the 1,000-square-foot terrace. Their agent, Stribling’s Sean Murphy Turner, says it would go today for about $3.8 million.

OVER THE ASK: Like Burberry, the Upper East Side has regained its standard-bearer status. After flirting with downtown or even the West Side, a whole new generation has learned to appreciate the long-held value Park and Fifth Avenues offer. “Especially if they have school-age children or younger,” says Robert Bland, a director at Brown Harris Stevens. Last November, practically nobody was interested in looking at an $8.5 million, 3,200-square-foot condo at prestigious 515 Park Avenue, despite the ten-foot ceilings, four bedrooms, and four baths. By the end of February, things had definitely changed, and potential buyers were trooping through the top-of-the-line kitchen with custom cherry cabinets.

MEDIUM RARE: What’s hot now among the hunt-country set? Anything mint. Blue-chip real estate is a good place to park a small fortune when the outlook for bond and equity investing remains hazy. Consequently, prices for the very best condos never really bottomed out, even as volume fell last year. “These condos are almost like a commodity, like a pink diamond. If you have a rare, exceptional pink diamond, it doesn’t matter what the market does. There will always be someone who wants it,” says Stribling’s Robin Rothman.

COMING ATTRACTIONS: “The condo market at this end is always about the latest building, like driving a car off the showroom floor,” Kirk Henckels of Stribling says. And this year, the buzz is about AOL Time Warner’s towers at Columbus Circle, scheduled to be ready for occupancy in fall 2003. Almost 200 units have been available since late August, with more than 60 sold. The biggest property to download so far: an 8,400-square-foot penthouse with a private security station and “airplane views,” which sold for more than $30 million. Downtown, developers are still planning on very expensive penthouses for new loft conversions, including the Sugar Warehouse at 79 Laight Street and Tower 270 near City Hall, which is offering two penthouses for $8.5 million and $10.5 million. But with financing harder to come by for developers, there will be fewer of these high-end downtown properties coming online in 2002 and 2003 than in years past.

CARL VOGEL

Townhouses

The trouble with townhouses is that there aren't enough to go around. Right now, Murray Hill and Harlem offer the most opportunities for would-be lords of the manor.

At least the screaming matches are over. A couple of years ago, Manhattan houses were selling much as dot-com stocks were, as speculators competed for properties in order to flip them for profit. This year, townhouse shoppers are acting almost civilized. "No one's throwing down sealed envelopes to make a bid anymore," says Stribling's Linda Melnick.

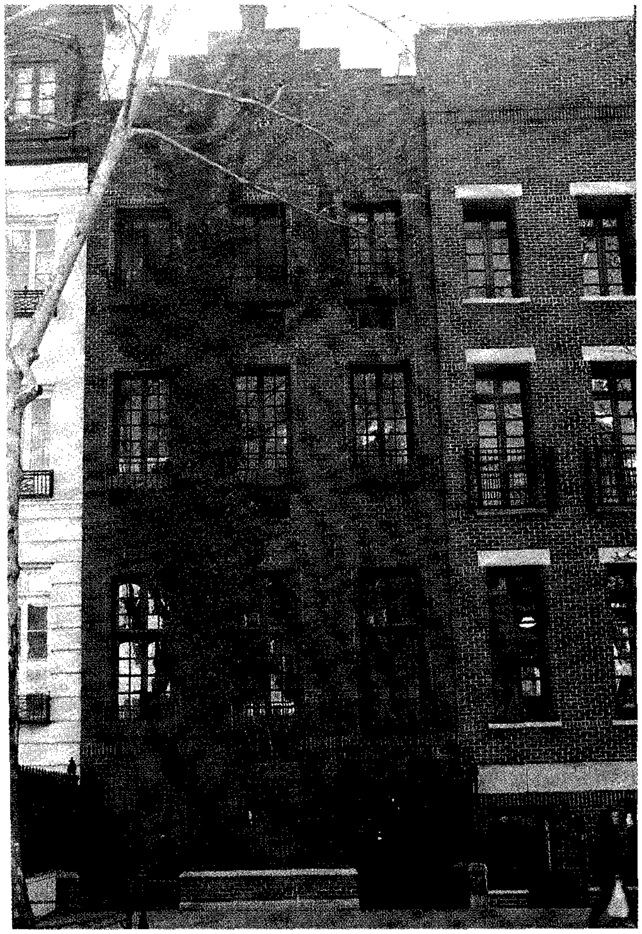
The typical buyers are now mostly families looking to buy a single-family home. Ask Marilyn and Arthur Penn, who are trying to find an institution or embassy to purchase their seven-story, $13 million house on East 74th Street near Fifth Avenue. It's been on the market for a year, because it's too large for a family. "We had a contract, and it just fizzled after September 11," Marilyn says of the building, which also does duty as Arthur's office.

Inventory is down only slightly from last year, and prices are off about 10 to 15 percent, except on the Upper West Side, which brokers say has been immune to the recession. A number of houses that *are* on the market are there to stay. "In late '99 and early '00, there was a feeding frenzy," Melnick says. "Now, if something's priced correctly, it's gone. If it's priced for the early months of 2000, it sits."

THE PRICE IS RIGHT: "Murray Hill is a secret pocket of opportunities," says Corcoran's Anne Snee. The quiet area is a short walk from midtown offices, and houses start at $2 million. "There's no huge difference between living on 60th Street or 30th Street," insists Kathleen Hoffman of William B. May. A few residents complain that it's not the best place for families, because there are few parks, and the tunnel traffic is noisy.

Harlem also draws bargain hunters. "If you want a beautiful single-family house and will do a little bit of looking, Harlem is the place," says Stribling's Bruce Ehrmann. Houses on Strivers' Row and Hamilton Terrace are sought-after, and the $1 million–and–less price tags are the lowest in Manhattan. (Prices on less well-known blocks are unbeatable, but many of those streets are far from gentrified, and security is still a real concern.) "We couldn't afford $4 million for a lovely townhouse," says architect Nicholas Bunning, who moved into his 5,000-square-footer in August. "But here, we're near the express subway stop in a wonderful, integrated neighborhood." The house, at Convent Avenue and 147th Street, has serious paneling and a dressing room with a marble sink. Bunning paid $425,000 for the house and is spending $280,000 on renovations, mostly on tech additions like networked plasma TVs. "I just like living in Manhattan, and I didn't want to feel like I was moving to the suburbs, like I would've if I moved to Brooklyn." Unlike Bunning, though, many buyers aren't looking to renovate.

FULL HOUSE: Michael Au is adding a larger skylight, a media room, and a new kitchen to this four-story, $4.8 million townhouse.



THE NUMBERS:

Murray Hill	$2M–$3M
Greenwich Village	$2.5M–$5M
Upper East Side	$2M–$9M
Carnegie Hill	$4M–$5M
Gramercy	$3M–$5M
Chelsea	$2M–$3M
Upper West Side	$3M–$7M
Harlem	$400K–$1M
Carroll Gardens	$700K–$1.2M
Brooklyn Heights	$1.5M–$3M
Fort Greene/Clinton Hill	$450K–$1M

OVER THE ASK: "It used to be that if you couldn't buy on the East Side, you bought on the West Side," says Lewis Kaye of LBK. "Now some of the west areas—like the Seventies off Central Park West—are more expensive." There's not much available on Central Park West, Riverside Drive, and West End, and what's there starts at $3 million. "On the Upper West Side, the blocks are a mix of hotels and tall buildings, so your backyard isn't an unobstructed view," says financier Michael Au, 33. He ended up with a four-story, $4.8 million house on East 64th Street (pictured). "I wanted a wide house, and I wanted a garden, and you get that on the East Side." Houses near Sutton Place are also getting top dollar, Kaye says. Some small ones on Sutton Square and Riverview Terrace are priced at more than $10 million.

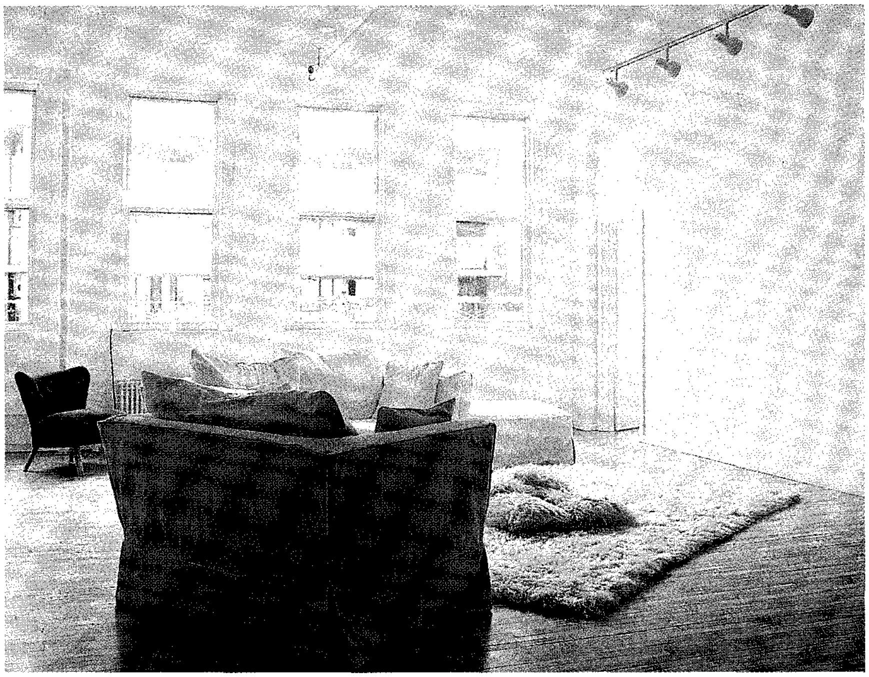
FARTHER AFIELD: Inventory is down a lot more in brownstone Brooklyn, and buyers are scrambling. "The sellers of a single-family house in Carroll Gardens asked $1.25 million—on the high end of their broker's recommendation," says William B. May's Christopher Thomas. "Within two days they had four offers, and they sold at more than the asking price." Overall, prices in Brooklyn Heights, Carroll Gardens, Cobble Hill, and Park Slope have fallen modestly. "At the higher end, the market has certainly retreated," Thomas says. "But at the lower end, there's been a slight increase."

ABBY TEGNELIA

Rentals

For the first time in a decade, it's a renter's market. Are you paying too much? Try Chelsea, Hell's Kitchen, or Yorkville, where landlords are ready to strike a deal.

If the sales market has more or less remained like *Weakest Link*, wherein buyers weather a barrage of insults and are left wondering where their money went, the rental market has become *Millionaire*, in which landlords throw a free month's rent, new stoves, and other lifelines at contestants who can't seem to get past the $32,000 question. "I've been doing this for almost ten years in Manhattan," says DJ Knight's Brian Kelly, "and in sales, I can tell you that things are building daily. But on the rental side, I'm seeing apartments that used to rent for $2,800 going for $2,300 on a great block in Chelsea, and they still have vacancies in the building."



WHITE HEAT: Richard Higgs rented this $4,000-a-month two-bedroom loft on West 23rd Street in Chelsea.

TRUTH OR SCARE? Contrary to rumors, the whole rental market hasn't gone to pot; it's just growing soft around the middle. Prices are down 8 to 12 percent citywide, but keep your expectations low for deals on studios and large two-bedrooms. Harder hit have been the one-bedrooms and junior fours typically sought by young, well-financed dot-com, media, and banking professionals. The retreat of this particular cohort has coincided with an ongoing development boom that has introduced more than 3,000 units into the downtown market alone in the past five years. The effect—especially in overbuilt areas like Chelsea, Hell's Kitchen, and Yorkville, or downtown areas that tenants have left in droves—has been a quadrupling of vacancy rates, and prices that hark back to 1999.

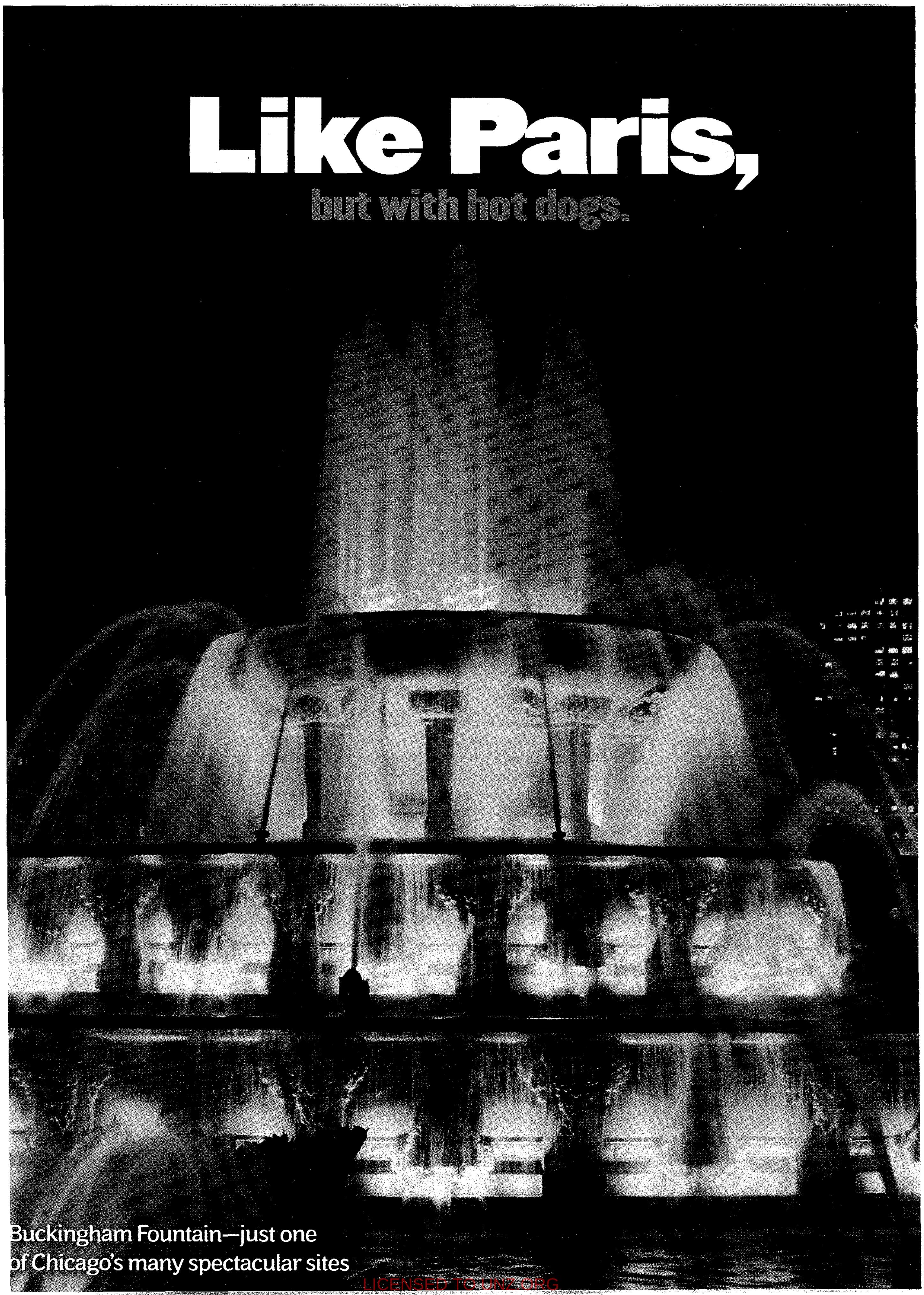
THE PRICE IS RIGHT: With its tree-lined streets and excellent subway access, Chelsea has the city's best deals. Six relatively new towers now occupy Sixth Avenue between 19th and 26th Streets, many offering up to 10 percent reductions (the Caroline, at Sixth and 23rd, is also throwing in a year's membership at New York Health & Racquet Club). And you can find even more deals west of Ninth Avenue and north of 25th Street. Richard Higgs, a manager at currency brokerage Prebon Yamane in Jersey City, found a newly renovated, 1,400-square-foot, key-elevator, two-bedroom loft at 521 West 23rd Street (pictured) that had been on the market since late June. The original price was $7,000, but by the time Corcoran's Laura Wagner showed it to Higgs in November, the price had dropped to $5,500, largely because of the construction of yet more high-rises across the street. Though the place had a wall of ten-foot windows, a view of the river, a washer and dryer, and a great location near Gallery Row, Higgs managed to wrangle a $1,000 break on the rent, and then *another* $1,000 break for every month of construction.

FARTHER AFIELD: Want character? Brownstone owners facing weaker demand in Brooklyn Heights and Park Slope are ready to talk. "Because they're so directly impacted by the loss of revenue, families are much more motivated to move quickly on the downside," says Victoria Negron of Corcoran's Brooklyn Heights office. Some owners have even begun to barter. "They'll throw in a fresh paint job, abandon their no-pets policy—anything that can cause the deal to close," says Negron.

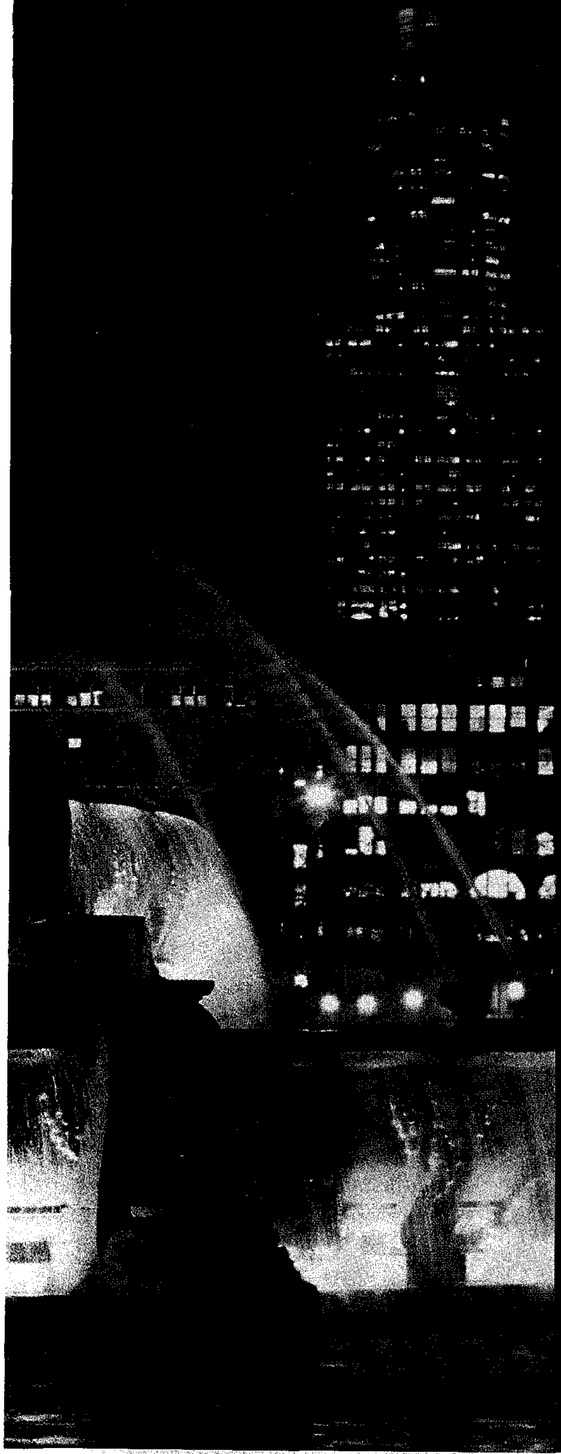
BUCK STOPS HERE: In prime areas like SoHo, Greenwich Village, Gramercy Park, and Park and Fifth Avenues, one-bedrooms still rent for $2,600 a month, simply because current residents aren't leaving. Even more in demand are areas where the rents are already relatively cheap, like the South Street Seaport, Harlem, and Alphabet City. Not only have the newly frugal flocked to these neighborhoods, keeping demand high, but prices are so low to begin with that there isn't much wiggle room.

THE OUTLOOK: Douglas Wagner, president of Benjamin James Real Estate, says that many management companies' offers to pay part of the broker's fee will end in March. Already, renters like Ethan Morris, a 27-year-old media supervisor for a direct-marketing company, are complaining about the ones that got away. "There was one other I liked more," says Morris, who just moved from his mom's place on the Upper West Side to a 1,000-square-foot one-bedroom that had been marked down from $2,300 to $2,000 on Remsen Street in Brooklyn Heights. He has a giant bay window, a fifteen-foot cathedral ceiling, an original fireplace, a new refrigerator, and six closets. But . . . "It's just that the other place was a two-bedroom and it had an elevator," he explains. "If that place was a 10, this place is a 9.5."

JADA YUAN



Like Paris,
but with hot dogs.
Buckingham Fountain—just one
of Chicago's many spectacular sites



CHICAGO

chicagomag.com

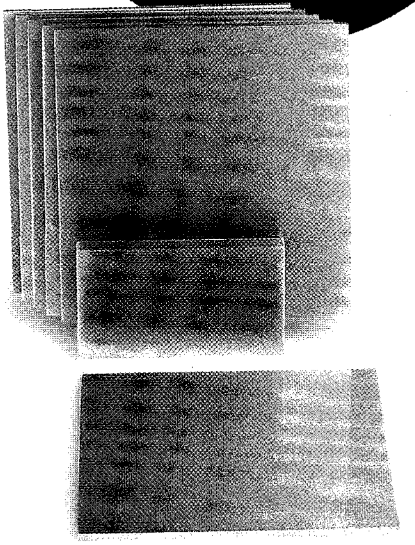
Chicago magazine's Web site has the inside scoop on events and exhibits, the tastiest dining listings in the city, and tons of other useful information.

Planning a visit, but want help?
Go to **chicagomag.com** and click on "Plan a Date."
Our editors will create a special night
in Chicago designed specifically for you.

Chicago mag.com

Best Bets

RIMA SUQI

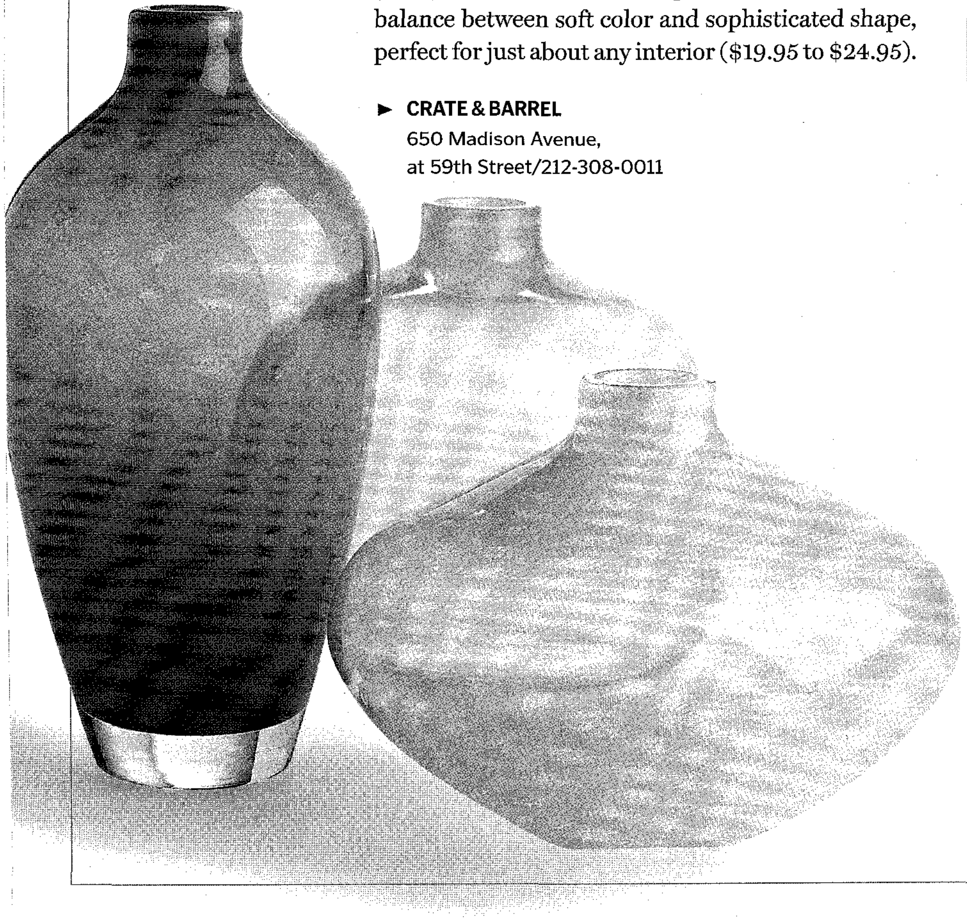


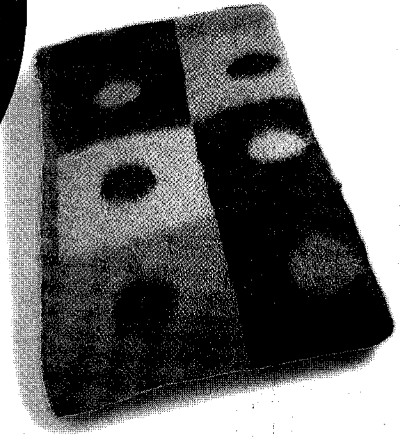
Hip to Be Square Coasters aren't usually the most thrilling things to buy, but we did a double take when we saw these square brushed-aluminum ones in a matching holder. They're so cool, you'll whip them out whether you're serving single-malt scotch or just a cerveza ($36.50 for a set of six).

► **AD HOC**
136 Wooster Street/212-982-7703

Pretty in Pink Pastel colors are no longer just for girly girls. Crate & Barrel's Opalin vases hit the right balance between soft color and sophisticated shape, perfect for just about any interior ($19.95 to $24.95).

► **CRATE & BARREL**
650 Madison Avenue,
at 59th Street/212-308-0011





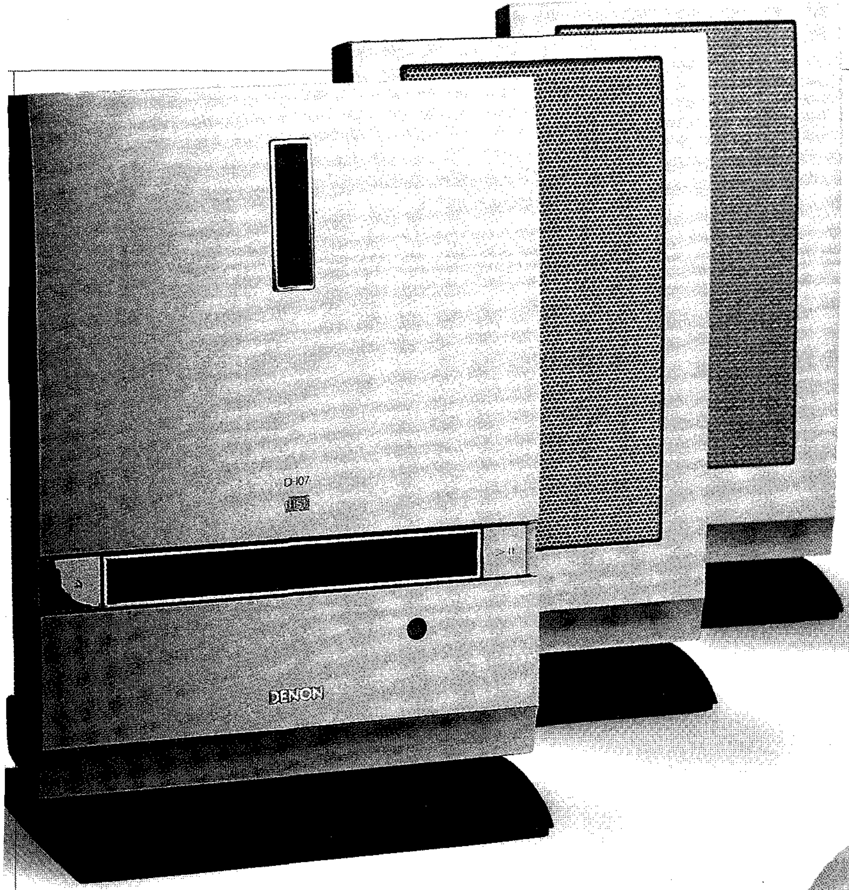
Cover Story Laura Friedland's brushed merino-wool blankets feel like cashmere but cost much less. They are unbelievably soft and come in pretty, springlike colors ($250).

► **ENVIRONMENT 337**
337 Smith Street, Brooklyn
718-522-1767

Leader of the Pack Nike isn't just for the gym anymore. The Atmosair, the company's first computer backpack, has a padded pocket for your laptop and a padded back, plus heavy-duty corner guards, a cell-phone holder, and adjustable straps that turn it into a messenger bag ($60).

► **NIKETOWN**
6 East 57th Street/212-891-6453

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ERIC PIASECKI.



Slim Chance Denon's Super Compact Music System sounds as good as it looks. The brushed-aluminum control module has a CD player, a 30-station AM-FM preset tuner, and a clock with a sleep timer. The system also includes ultraslim two-way, three-driver speakers, and a powered subwoofer. The best part? Everything, including the subwoofer, can be wall-mounted ($749).

► **J&R MUSIC WORLD**
23 Park Row/212-238-9000

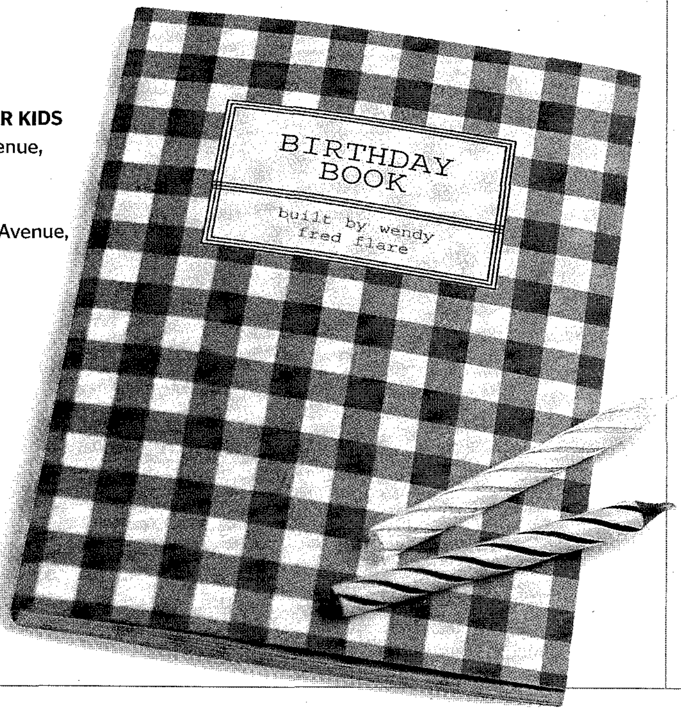
► **THE WIZ (ALL STORES)**

► **WWW.DENON.COM**

Writes of Passage This supercute birthday book is the ultimate hint for friends who forget. A collaboration between Wendy Mullin (of Built by Wendy) and the folks at Fred Flare, the gingham-covered volume has very cool illustrations, tips on where to buy candy, flowers, and jewelry, and even a cake recipe ($8).

► **PATCH NYC**
17 Eighth Avenue
212-807-1060

► **COZY'S CUTS FOR KIDS**
1125 Madison Avenue,
near 84th Street
212-744-1716
448 Amsterdam Avenue,
near 81st Street
212-579-2600



Don't Be Poopy A litter box is a litter box. Usually. Now you can color-coordinate yours with your bathroom. The Barking Zoo has frosted plastic boxes ($40) and scoops ($20) in several mix-and-match colors.

► **THE BARKING ZOO**
172 Ninth Avenue,
near 21st Street/212-255-0658

Sign up for the Best Bets Daily Newsletter at **nymetro.com/newsletters.** Every Monday through Friday, we'll e-mail you a new "Best Bet" and a "Sales & Bargains" update. While you're there, search our online guide to more than **1,500 of New York's best shops.**

Season's Highlights

S&B's convinced these salons to highlight your hair for 25 percent off. So go ahead—color yourself crazy.

UNSEASONABLY WARM winter days can make even the coolest snow bunny eager for spring. So we've enlisted a few of our favorite salons to brighten your hair—and your spirits—for at least 25 percent off their usual rates. Just mention *New York* Magazine when you book, and bring this page to your appointment (don't forget to tip as you would have without the discount). Hurry—these special rates are available to first-time customers only through March.

Gil Ferrer, a cozy uptown salon, is giving our readers a choice between single-process color (which usually starts at $85, now $64) and highlights (which are usually from $225 on up; they are now $169). 21 E. 74th St. (212-535-3543).

Oscar Blandi's junior (but quite experienced) stylists are now charging just $85 (usually $150) for a single-process coloring. And hey, who doesn't like having her hair done at the Plaza? 768 Fifth Ave., at 59th St. (212-593-7930).

Glow will give you either single-process color (from $64; usually from $85) or highlights (from $120; usually from $160)—and throw in a free shampoo or conditioner from Toni & Guy. 36 E. 23rd St. (212-228-1822).

Salon Ishi, a sleek, chic midtown hair salon, usually charges $92 and up for single-process color. With this deal, the service is only $69. 70 E. 55th St. (212-888-4744).

LAUREN DECARLO

Picks of the Week

Odegard has a huge assortment of rare and original Oriental carpets for 75 percent off the regular prices (they're now $350 to $4,000). 200 Lexington Ave., near 32nd St., seventh and twelfth fls. (212-545-0069); M.C., V.; Thurs.-Sat. 10-4; 3/7-3/9.

A.V. Max's trendy handbags, belts, and jewelry (you've probably seen these things at stores like Henri Bendel) are now at least 60 percent cheaper than they usually are. Sample sale prices are $5 to $25. 50 W. 36th St., second fl. (212-216-0600); cash only; Mon.-Thurs. 10-5; 3/4-3/7.

Sarajo is taking 75 percent off a selection of exotic-chic Indian, Thai, and Burmese antiques, plus a smattering of similar-looking new furniture. Prices at this "basement sale" are a mere $200 to $650. 130 Greene St. (212-966-6156); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Sat. 11-7, Sun. noon-7; 3/10-3/20.

Henri Bendel's sleek, timeless, private-label knitwear for women comes in a huge range of shapes and colors. At the end-of-season sale, you can stock up on them for up to 25 percent off the regular prices (they're now $49 to $79). 712 Fifth Ave., at 56th St. (212-247-1100); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Sat. 10-7, Thurs. 10-8, Sun. noon-6; 3/10-4/14.

Suzanne Couture Millinery has ornate hats and accessories—many of which are perfect for spring—for 30 to 75 percent off her usual prices. They're now $75 to $250. 700 Madison Ave., near 62nd St. (212-593-3232); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Fri. 10-6, Sat. 11-5; 3/1-4/30. ■

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ILLUSTRATION BY EDWINA WHITE.

stylish HOME

WHAT MAKES A STYLISH HOME? EXPERTS AGREE THAT IT'S MORE A MATTER OF COMFORT THAN CONFORMITY.

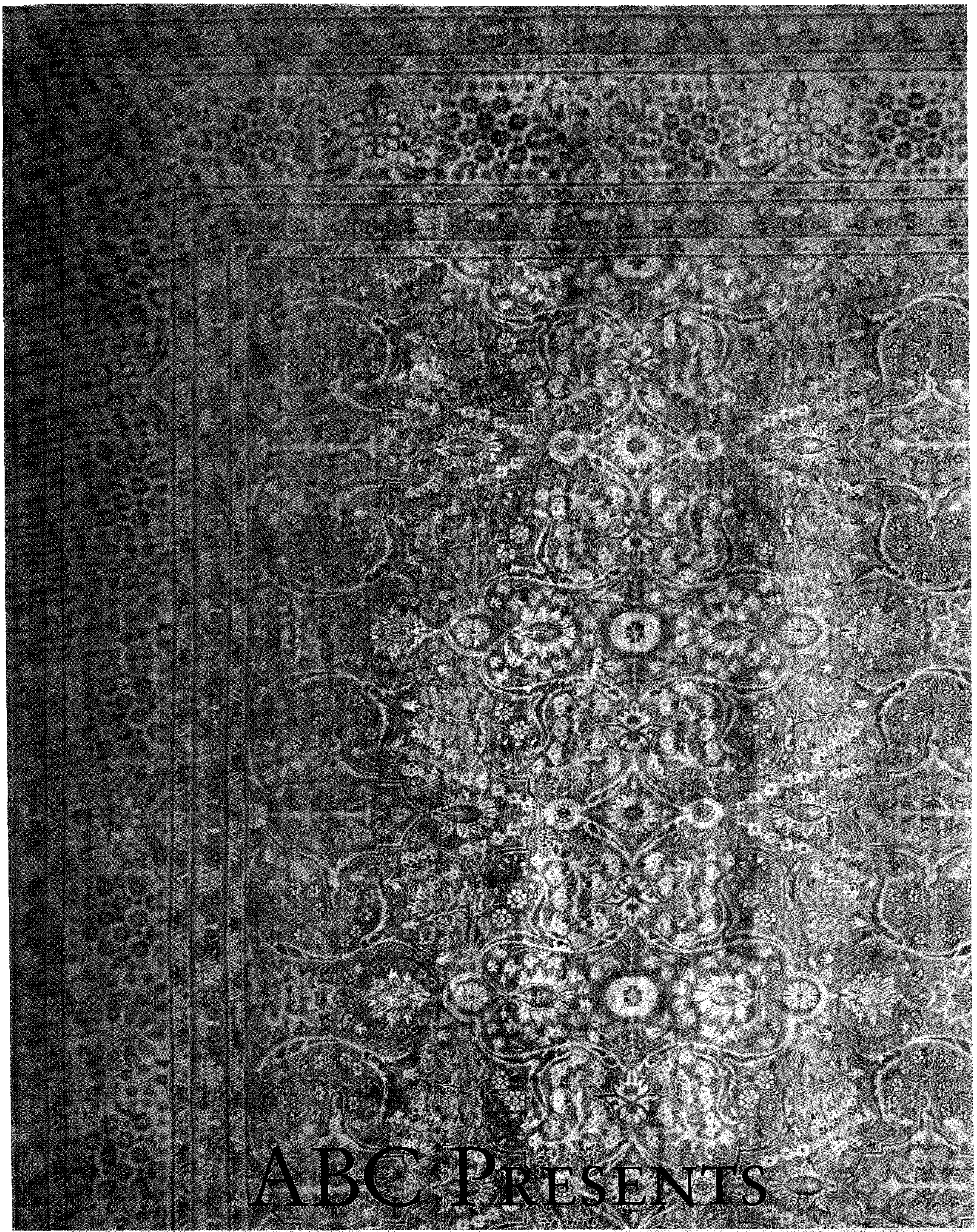
throw out the rulebook, say our experts. What matters most in creating a stylish home is freeing yourself from the must-haves of a bygone era. It's all "contemporary," isn't it? After all, that antique credenza that houses your DVD player has taken on new life now that it serves such a modern and practical purpose. So ignore labels and surround yourself with the colors you love, the textures that feel right to your hand, and the pieces that make sense in your complicated, 21st-century life. Here's your primer on what's new, realistic, and fresh...what's showing now, in today's up-to-the-minute, great-looking homes.

let's talk rugs

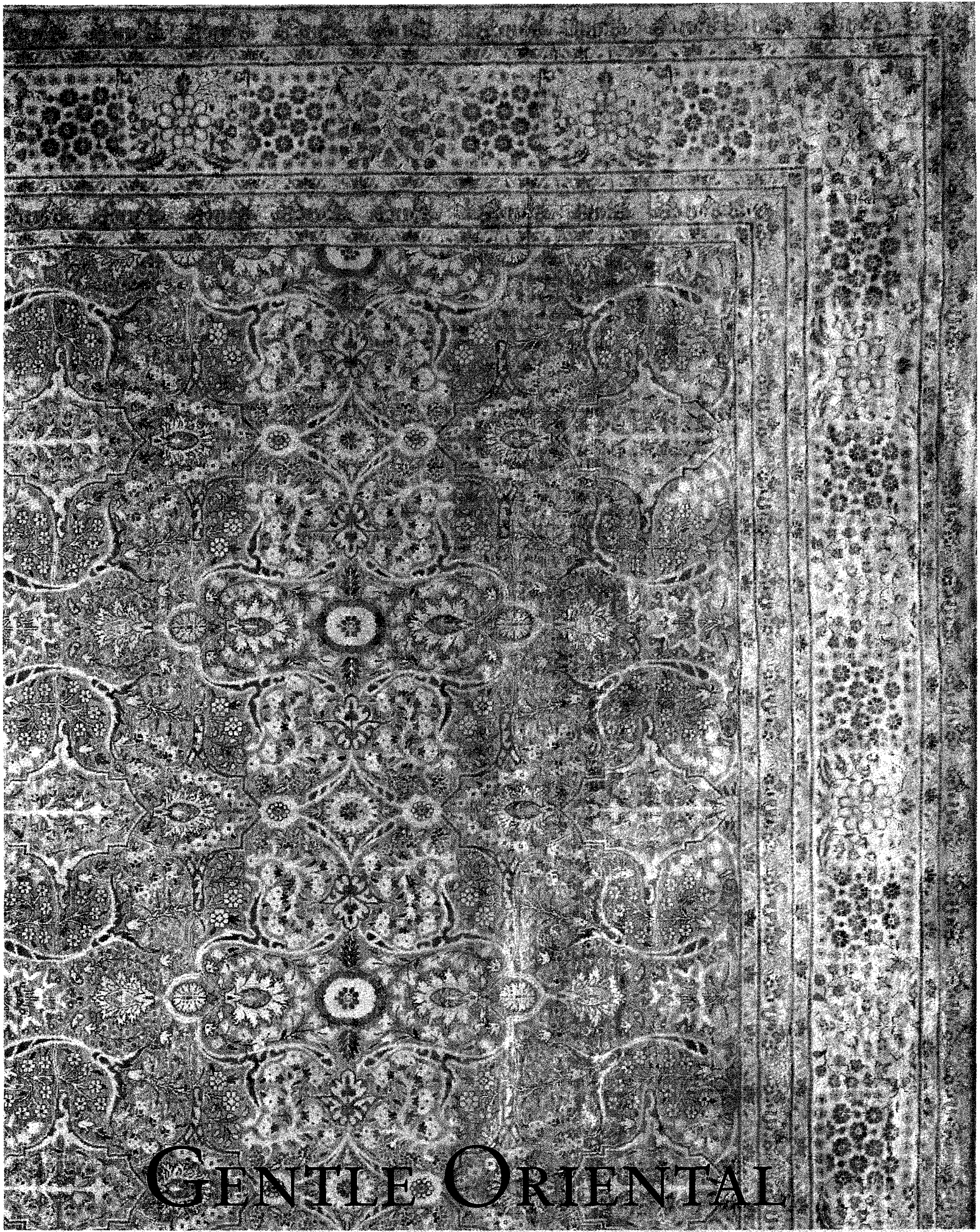
"People have more confidence in their tastes and sensibilities. They are more assertive in making sure they collect the things they like," observes Graham Head, president of ABC Carpet & Home's Rug Division. Head took us through the major reasons lovers of rugs—from the passionate collector to the first- and one-time buyer—turn to **ABC Carpet & Home**. At the same time, he illuminated some overall trends in the world of rugs:

Value above all: "The overriding observation in home design right now is that consumers are looking for real and perceived value," says Head. Because ABC Carpet & Home routinely buys in massive quantities, value is an everyday occurrence. Recent purchases include incredible deals in very special Black Mountain Looms, which are vegetable-dyed and hand-spun in Turkey and China. "Every rug in this collection is one-of-a-kind. And because we were able to buy a large quantity of these rugs, we're able to pass the savings on to our customers," says Head. "For one-third to one-half of the typical retail price, customers are getting a rug of quality and integrity."

BEVERLY HOOD ALLEN CREATIVE SERVICES DIRECTOR CHRISTY CASAMASSIMA EDITOR
LORY CONKLIN RESEARCH KIM FLODIN WRITER


ABC Presents

Manhattan 888 Broadway (212) 674-1144, 881 Broadway (212) 473-3000 x 450 Bronx, NY 1055 Bronx River Avenue (718) 842-8770


GENTLE ORIENTAL

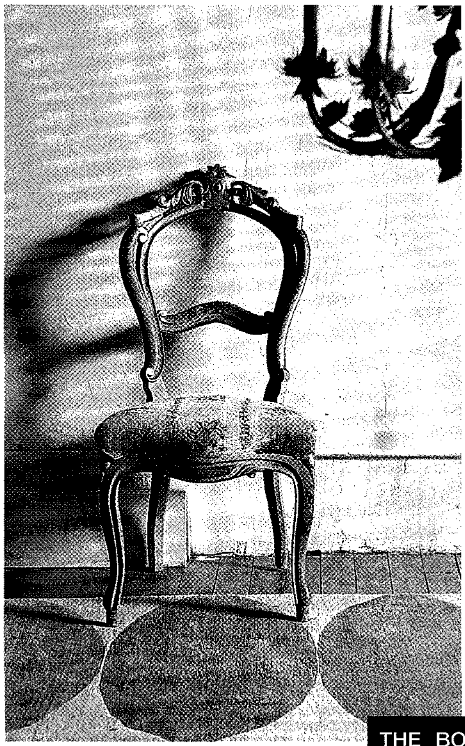
Delray Beach, FL 777 South Congress (561) 279-7777 London ABC Carpet at Harrods, 3rd fl. (44) (20) 7730-1234

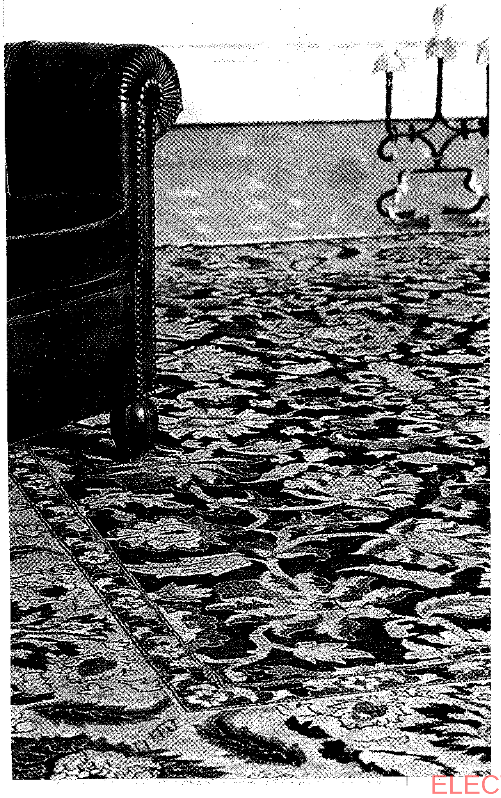
ABC
★ CARPET & HOME ★

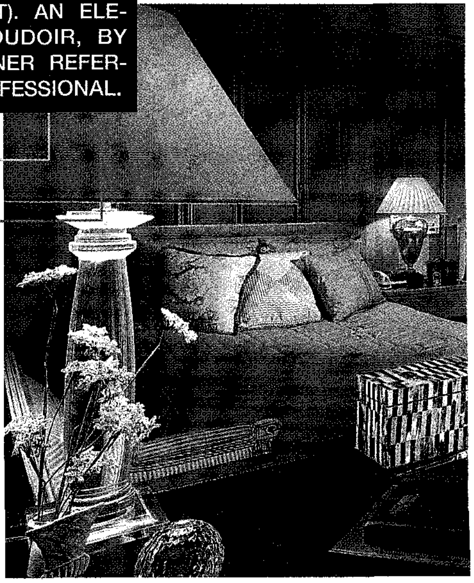
A plethora of choices: At ABC Carpet & Home, value goes hand-in-hand with astounding inventory. In fact, you can choose from an amazing number of rugs (try 41,000 on for size) in a breathtaking range of prices. "ABC Carpet & Home is probably the only store in the world where you can get a $150,000 antique Persian rug and a doormat under the same roof," says Head.

The offbeat twist: Aside from the general emphasis on value and choice, Head also spots a trend for the traditional with just a little something new thrown in for good measure. "Our Rajput collection is a perfect example," says Head. This collection presents basically traditional Oriental designs in typical proportions but enlivened with unexpected colors of purples, lavenders, mustards, and aqua-greens. "The effect is surprising and very beautiful," notes Head. Another collection called Amagansett, by designer Madeline Weinrib, features traditional dhurries done in funky citrus colors for a fresh look. "Dhurries are very much in fashion these days because of their durability, affordability and, as in Weinrib's case, their often-contemporary feel."

Putting avant-garde in its place: Head thinks rugs, such as those in the Rajput and Amagansett collections, are resonating with today's buyers because consumers are unabashedly embracing a real-life agenda. "There seems to be a more mature understanding that the way-out stuff may be fine for magazines and window displays, but not so suitable underfoot every day, for the next 10 years or more," explains Head. "Faddish, designer names are a lot less important than they were a few years ago," he adds.







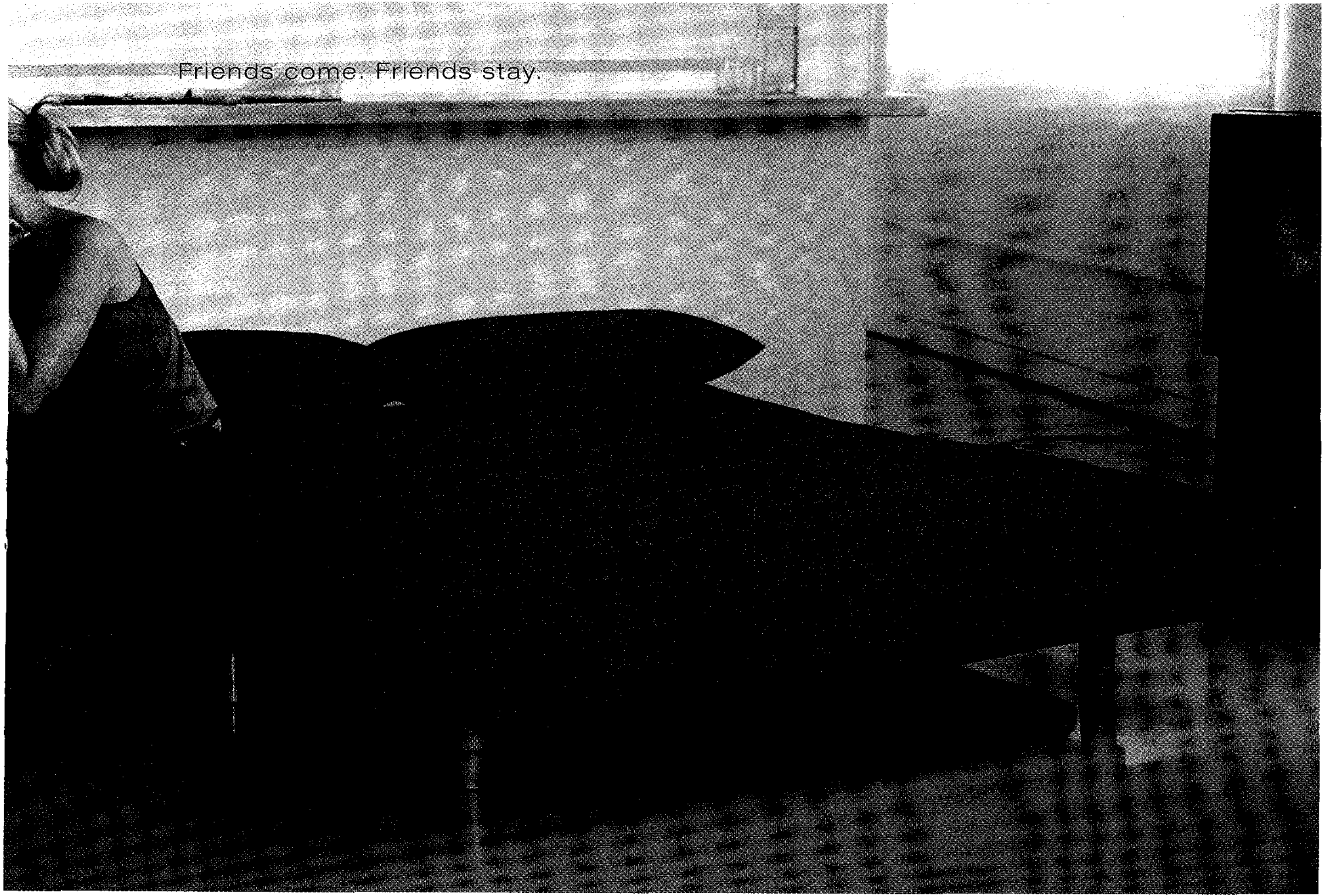
THE BOLD AND THE BEAUTIFUL AT ABC CARPET & HOME (TOP AND LEFT). AN ELEGANT BOUDOIR, BY A DESIGNER REFERRALS PROFESSIONAL.

As the ABC Carpet & Home Web site points out—carpets are the maps of the world. Here's your own map to make your way around ABC's world of carpet offerings, located in two landmark buildings in the historic Flatiron District:

The Sixth floor at 888 Broadway opened in 1986, paying homage to the exotic rug-weaving regions where nomads and villagers still create precious textiles by hand as their ancestors have done for centuries. This astounding array of vibrant color, intricate design, and sumptuous texture is displayed in a top-floor loft setting with 25-foot ceilings, natural daylight, and wide-open space. Here you'll find an assortment of antiques, Art Deco, Aubusson, Rajput, Khyber, Samode, Angora, Tibetan, Tufenkian, silk, mansion sizes, and special collections from around the world.

The International Design Rugs at 881 Broadway was the site of ABC Carpet & Home's first collection of rugs, marking its departure from selling only broadloom in 1981. Now, the mind-boggling collection includes kilims, needlepoints, dhurries, handknotted carpets from India, Nepal, Pakistan, and China, and a range of specialized categories,

"choose pricey Persians to doormats."



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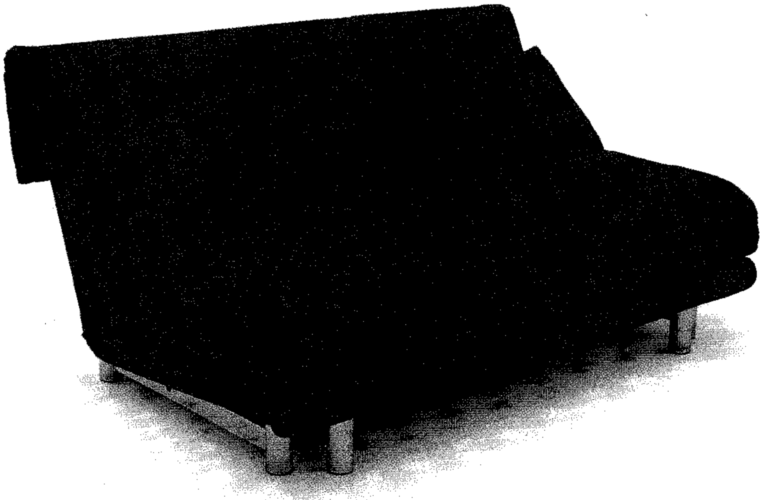

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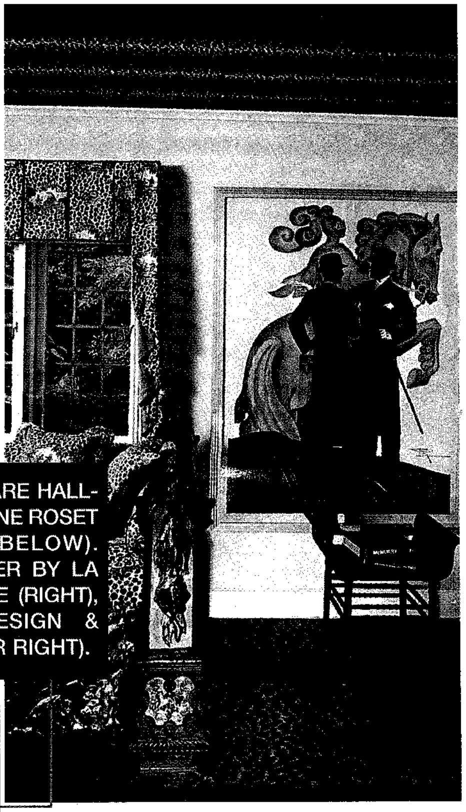
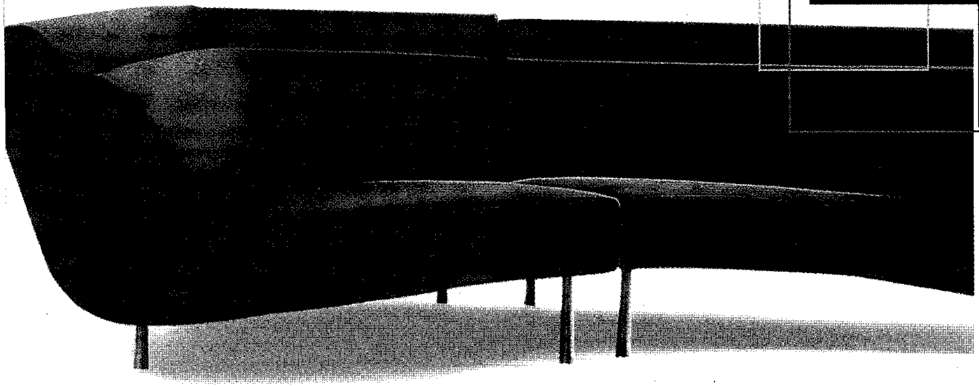
such as contemporary, cotton-rag rugs, children's, braids, machine-made rugs, and the ever-popular sisal.

Broadloom at 881 Broadway has long established its reputation for quality and value by becoming the country's largest purveyor and importer of wool floorcovering. ABC Carpet & Home warehouses 300,000 square yards of imported and domestic carpet in every color, style, texture and price. The store also handles all types of carpet installations, from remnants for a tiny apartment foyer, to contract carpet for an entire convention center.

ABC Carpet & Home, Broadway at East 19th Street; General: 473-3000; Oriental Rugs: 674-1144; www.abchome.com.



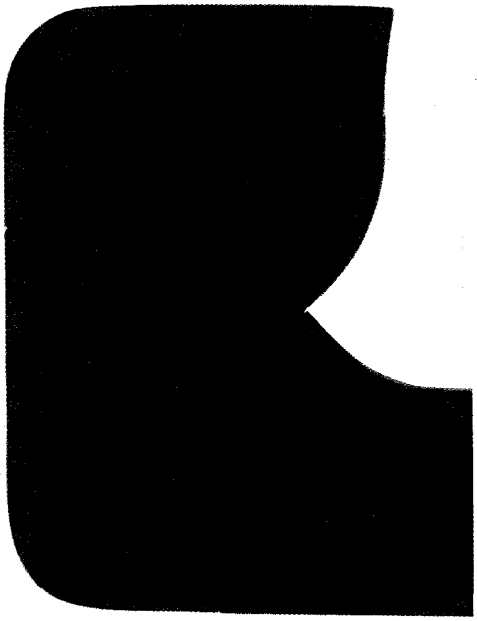


SLEEK LINES ARE HALLMARKS OF LIGNE ROSET (LEFT AND BELOW). FRENCH POSTER BY LA BELLE EPOQUE (RIGHT), SOFA BY DESIGN & COMFORT (FAR RIGHT).

flexible modernism

Ligne Roset, the French source of modern furnishings that promote an elegantly streamlined "Le Style de Vie," is an often-contacted listing in the Palm™ Pilots of contemporary and modern furnishing fans. Known for its distinctive, understated, and beautifully crafted furniture, Ligne Roset has forged a path all its own. Quality, flexibility, and a timeless modernity are the hallmarks of Ligne Roset, which proudly has introduced new designs. The just-arrived offerings extend the company's already comprehensive collection of lounge seating, chairs, and tables. The new items include pieces by Francois Faucet, Jerome Gather, Didier Gomez, Arik Levy, Peter Maly, Pascal Mourgue, and Christian Werner. Each piece has its own distinct character, and yet all reflect the global modernism for which Ligne Roset is celebrated.

Take Francois Faucet's "Yang," for instance, a sectional-lounge seating system that begins with one basic, yet complex, shape that can be combined to create any number of configurations from a single settee to a spacious corner group. The seat, back, and lumbar cushions are made of Bullet foam with removable covers. The tubular steel frame has steel-finished matte-chrome feet.



As "Yang" and all the furnishings from Ligne Roset illustrate, you can welcome the spirit of flexibility without giving up the aesthetic of timeless modernity. *Ligne Roset, 250 Park Ave. S., 375-1036; 155 Wooster St. at Houston Street, 253-5629; 180 Post Road E., Westport, CT, 203-221-8499; www.lignerosetny.com.*

invest in your home

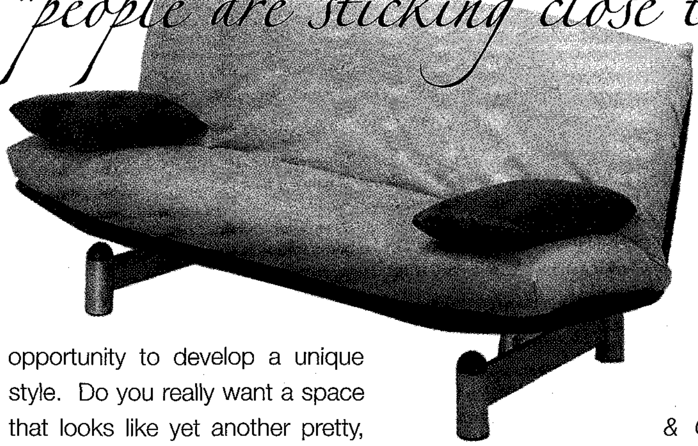
Everyone in the design industry notices it. People are sticking closer to their own turf, curling up on the couch, and relishing the comfort of home and hearth. "People spending more time at home usually take a look around and say, 'I want my home to be at its best,'" says Judy Block, president of **Designer**

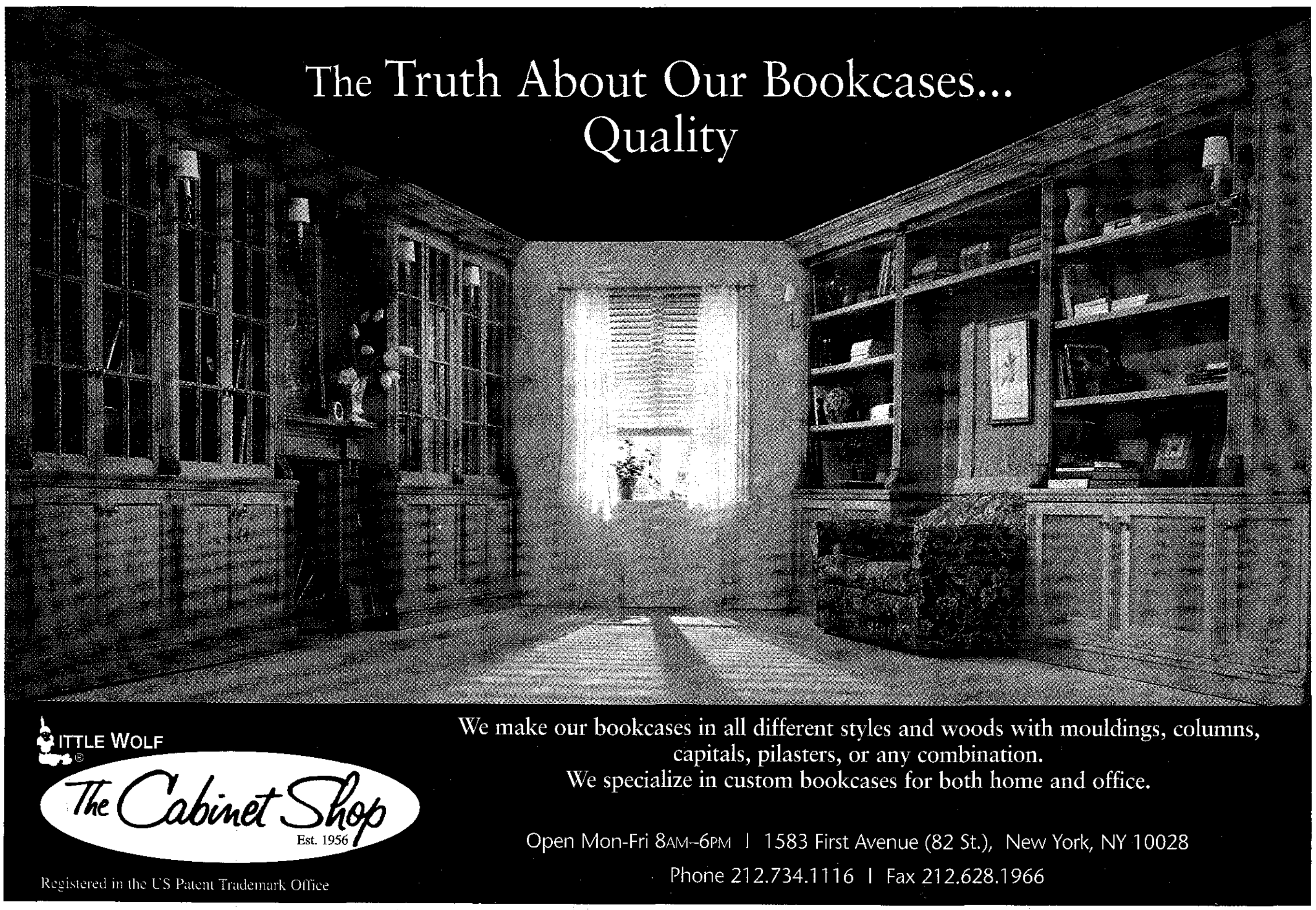
Referral Service, an agency that lets you select from a broad roster of talented interior designers and architects. And when that notion kicks in, it's often time to get an interior designer. Block interviews prospective clients to evaluate needs and determine taste, budget, personality, and style requirements. Then she recommends a match based on 16 years' worth of contacts and thousands of images. *Designer Referral Service of NY, Ltd., P.O. Box 614, Chappaqua, NY, 10514, 914-234-0190 or 971-9681; e-mail: judyblockz@ drsnyltd.com; www.drsnyltd.com.*

ahead of the trends

There is decent design in today's mass marketing outlets; you almost can't goof if you follow the safe, color-by-number route. However, if you're prone to shopping the same old haunts everyone else knows about, you do risk losing the opportunity to develop a unique style. Do you really want a space that looks like yet another pretty, but mass-produced home catalog setting? How do the iconoclasts among us forge ahead? "Get off the beaten track," says Leonard Zion of **Design & Comfort,** which offers unique contemporary furniture with European styling. "When you stroll around our showrooms, you're seeing leathers in vibrant colors, strong, warm woods, and furniture for the whole house that will put you ahead of the trends," Zion explains. *Design & Comfort, 440 Park Avenue S., 679-9088; 380 W. Broadway, 334-1000; www.designandcomfort.com.*

> *"people are sticking close to home"*

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stylish HOME

about advertising art

Vintage advertising art makes a grand statement in any home. Experts from **La Belle Epoque Vintage Posters** suggest that you consider:

- Your interests—posters can depict professions or hobbies.
- The room's purpose—food-related posters for the dining area, for instance.
- Your décor—pick from a variety of poster styles (realist, romantic, modern, cubist).

La Belle Epoque Vintage Posters, 280 Columbus Ave. at 73rd Street, 362-1770; www.la-belle-epoque.com.

"go on, consult a pro."

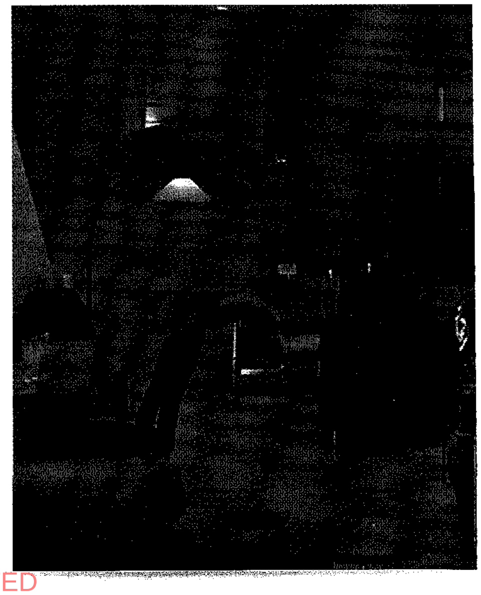
LA BELLE EPOQUE (LEFT), DESIGNER PREVIEWS (RIGHT), AND DDC DOMUS DESIGN COLLECTION SHOWROOM (BELOW).

a showroom worth visiting

If you want to soak up the air of contemporary chic or, of course, buy something fabulous, Seemak Hakakian of **ddc domus design collection,** invites you to their 30,000 square-foot, Phillip Johnson-designed space, which just won the Rising Star Award for Best New Showroom Design from Fashion Group International. "The expansive space allows us to show off our extensive product line. You can feel and touch things, not depend on pictures," says Hakakian. "We don't just display one or two beds, we have eight different styles; we have 15 sofas. We have all different room configurations and different price points. But every product is high quality with excellent craftsmanship, and good design informed by classic sensibilities." *ddc domus design collection, 181 Madison Ave. at 34th Street, 685-0800; www.ddcnyc.com.*

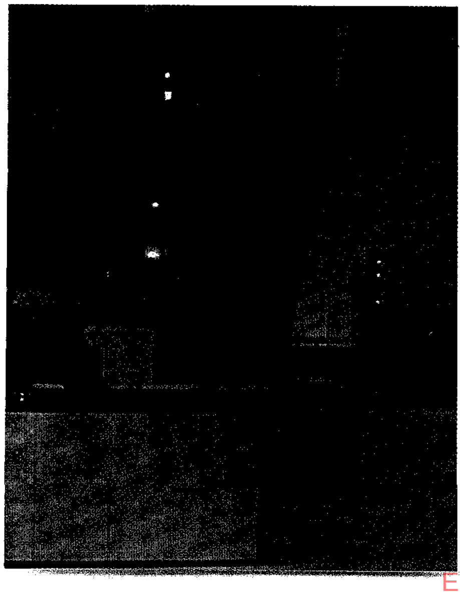
professional praise

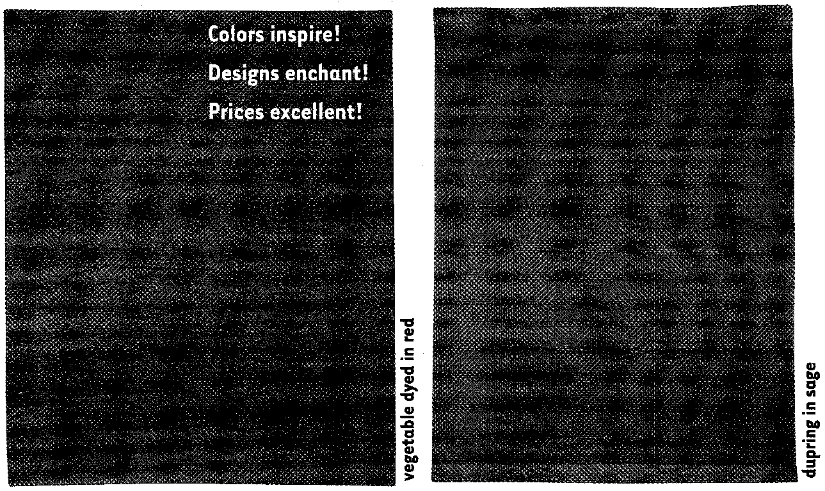
Think you can skip hiring an interior designer? Think again, because it's 2002 and you are very busy. "So much time, energy, and money goes into decorating," says Karen Fisher of **Designer Previews,** which helps clients choose their designers and architects from her superb selection. "Hiring a well-matched professional completes half your job, because you'll see ideas, furnishings, and colors that already reflect your taste," explains Fisher. *Designer Previews, 36 Gramercy Park E., 777-2966; www.dpreviews.com.*



custom home office

If you haven't been to **techline Studio** recently, you're in for a surprise. Yes, they are still the home-office design experts combining factory direct custom-size and custom-shape work surfaces with cost-effective modular cabinets. They just offer a whole lot more, especially if you're drawn to the warmth of wood. Take their new Jesper line, for instance. This all-wood veneer product is available in teak, oak, maple, and cherry, and boasts options for decorative inlays. "The Danish-contemporary style works well mixed with the clean look of techline," says Gavin Bromell, design director of techline Studio. The actual techline products are also available in cherry and maple-wood tones and you can now pick from optional inserts to create customized cubbyhole and organizing spaces. These flexible units are particularly practical for maximixing those extremely tight apartment spaces. *techline Studio, 35 E. 19th St., 674-1813 or 1-800-697-7573; www.techlinestudio.com.*





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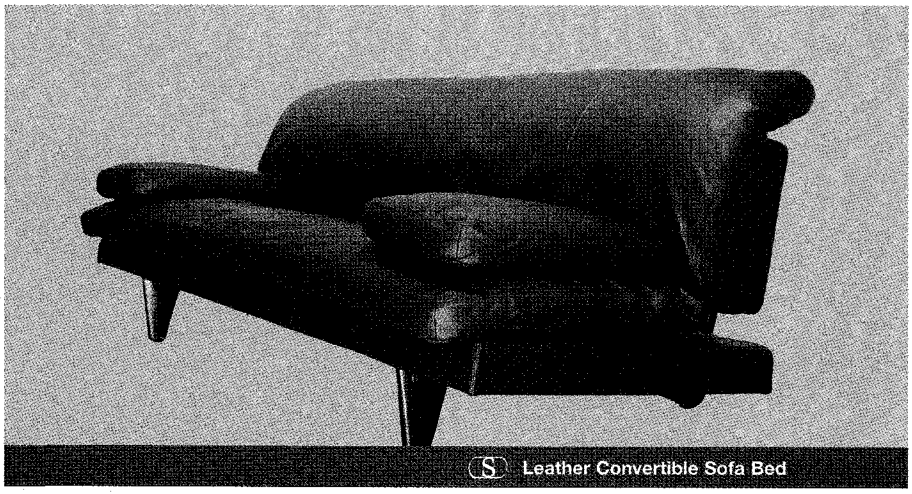

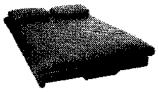

expecting guests?

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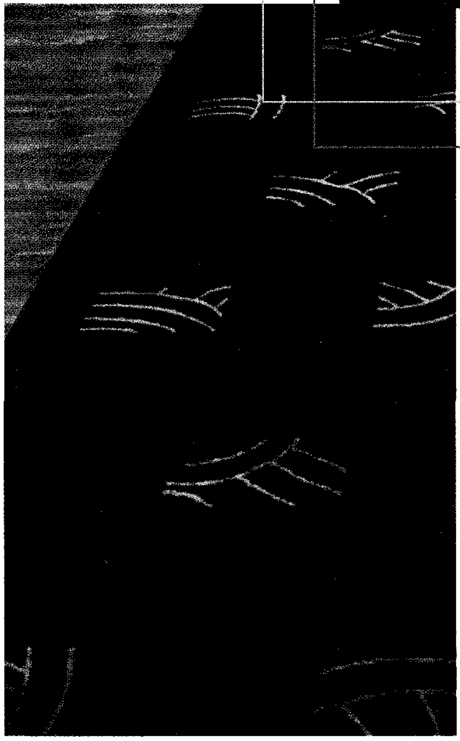
stylish HOME

tibetan treasures

If you're looking to invest in a piece of history and help preserve a dying culture, while at the same time you're getting a dynamite carpet, consider a rug handcrafted from the finest Tibetan sheep wool by Tibetan refugees in Nepal. **Dolma,** a business run by four Tibetan sisters and their families, provides quality, value, service, and the best price. The family also owns a production facility in Nepal. "My family has been in this business for generations and we all now feel fortunate and honored to offer this beautiful handicraft from Tibet," states Yeshi Choden. Dolma stocks all standard sizes and specializes in custom work and rich, vegetable-dyed rugs.

DOLMA (LEFT) AND TECHLINE (RIGHT). LONG'S BEDDING (FAR RIGHT).



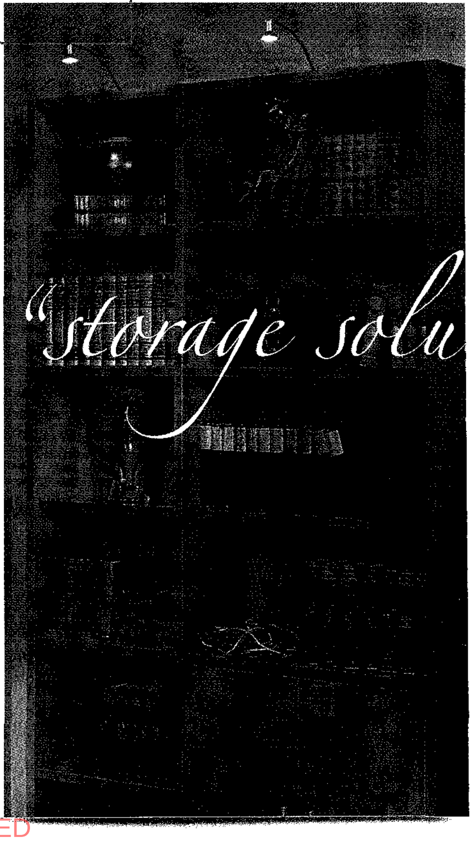
Dolma, 417 Lafayette St., 2nd floor between Astor Place and East Fourth Street, 460-5525.

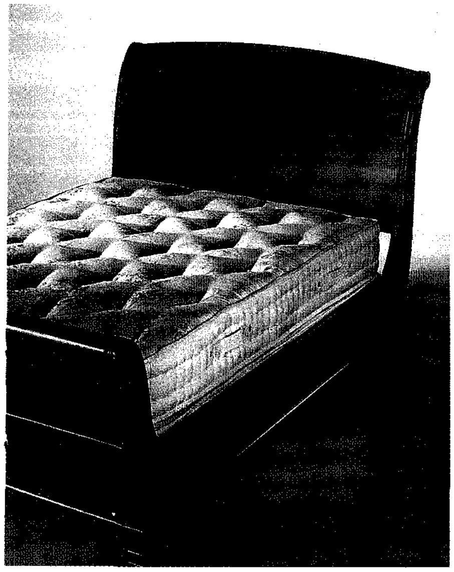
antique bed modern mattress

Antique beds are totally at ease in traditional homes and quirky and interesting in more contemporary spaces. Yup, antique beds are great...that is, until you try to find a mattress to fit them. **Long's Bedding** to your rescue! This fourth-generation, family-owned business, which sells quality mattresses, headboards, storage beds, high-rise and day beds, can even custom-make a mattress for any difficult-to-fit bed. *Long's Bedding, 121 W. 72nd St., 873-1752; www.LongsBedding.com.*

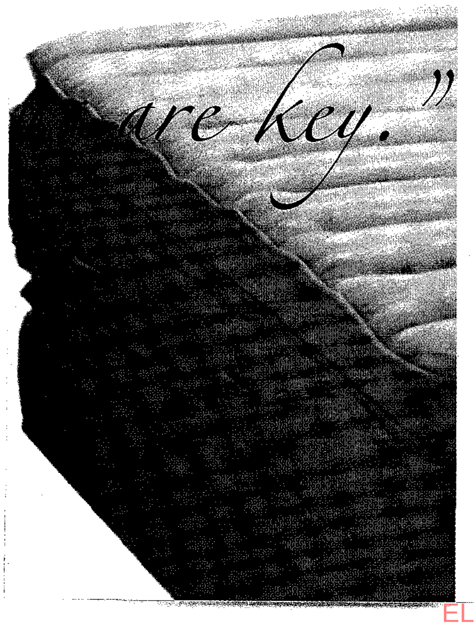
metal's edge

Nothing lends a more contemporary look than the glint of metal. **Carlyle Custom Convertibles** has just introduced a range of metal





arms and legs to its furniture options—chrome, brushed steel, and brass—in any width or depth. “From a closed, sleek model to a more airy railing, these stylish arms go perfectly with the European designs you now see,” says Darren deMatteo, president. And, if you're lucky enough to already own a handcrafted, custom-made sofa, sofa bed, ottoman, or chair from Carlyle, but want to refresh its look, Carlyle will gladly update your piece with a set of new, snazzy metal legs. *Carlyle Custom Convertibles, Classic Collection: 1056 Third Ave., 838-1525; Chelsea Collection & Clearance: 122 W. 18th St., 675-3212; Studio Collection: 1375 Third Ave., 570-2236; www.carlylesofa.com.*



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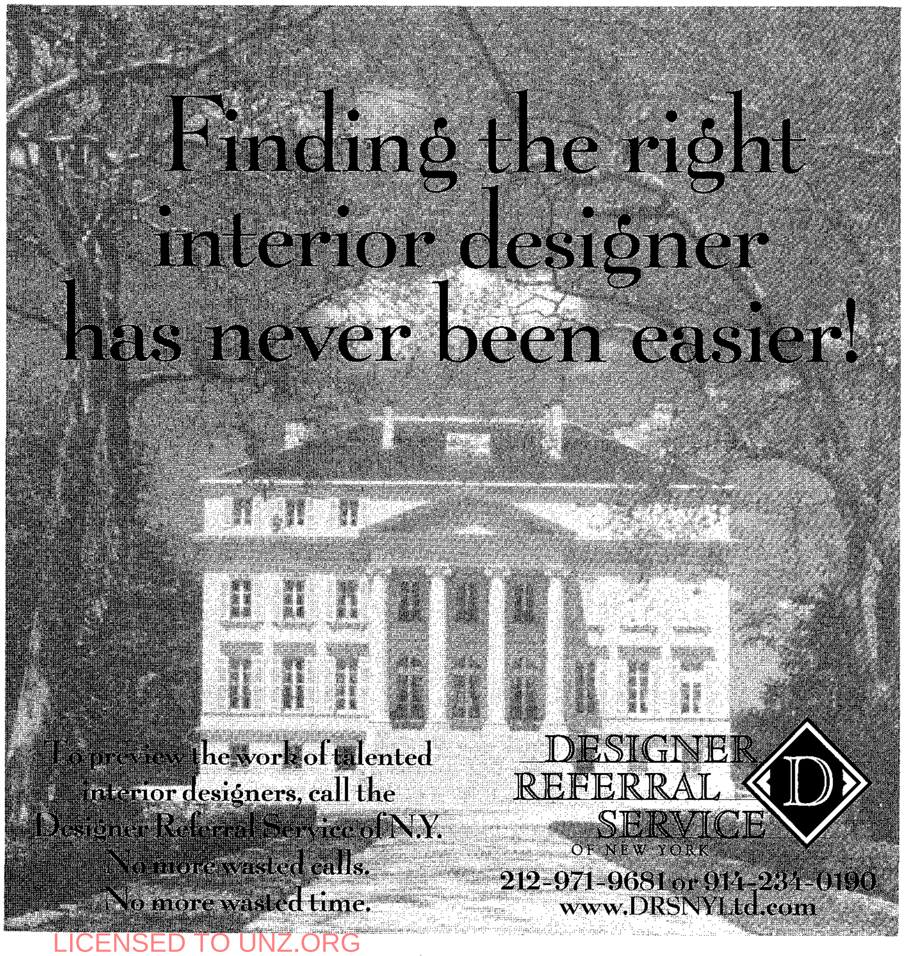
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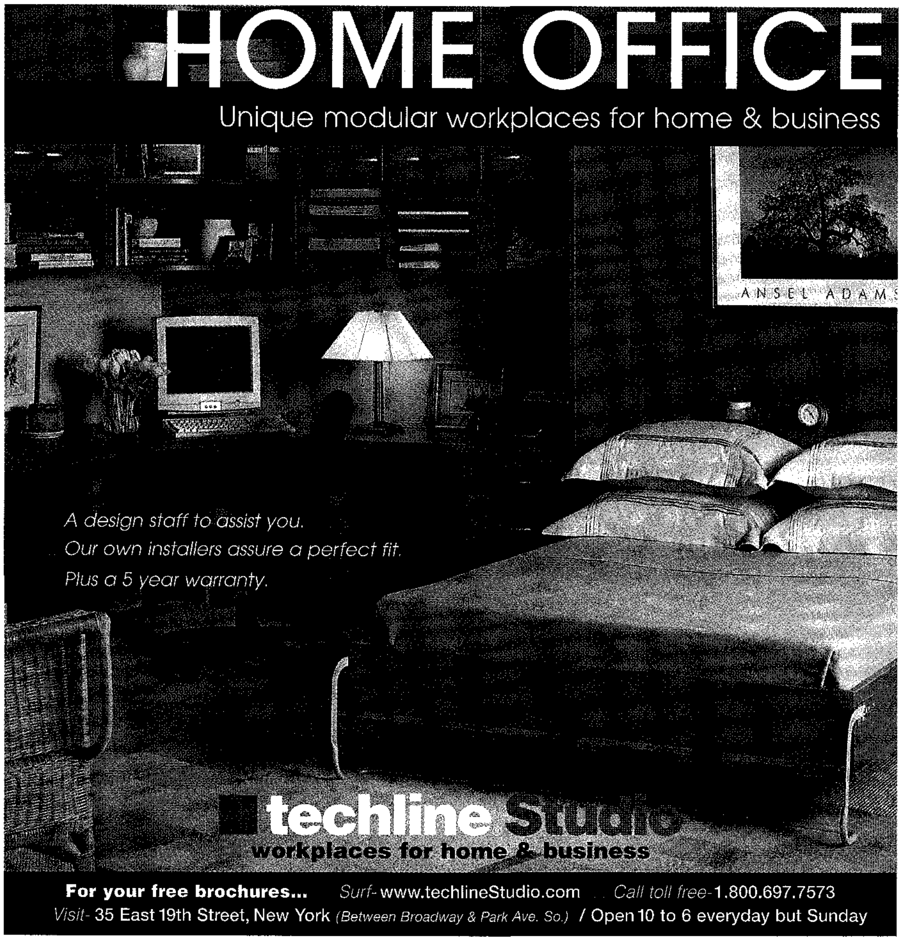
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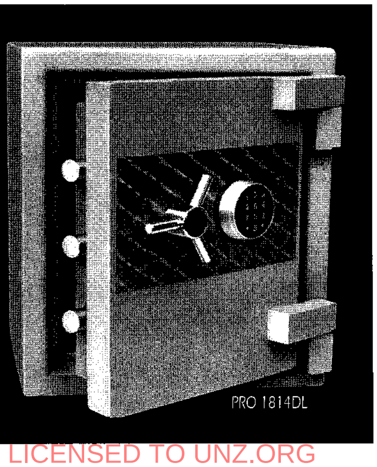

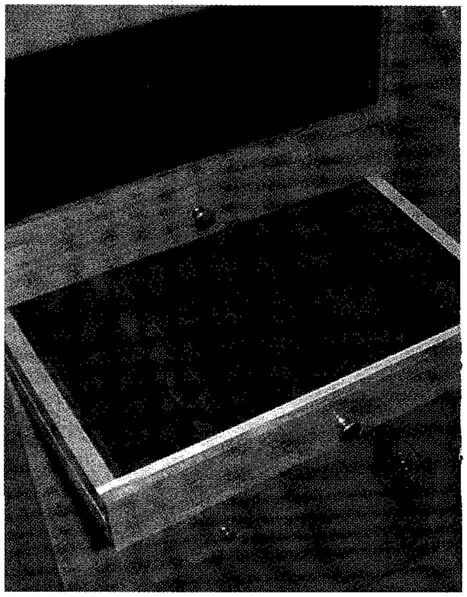

being safe in style

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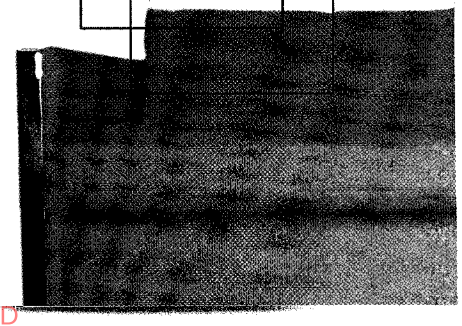
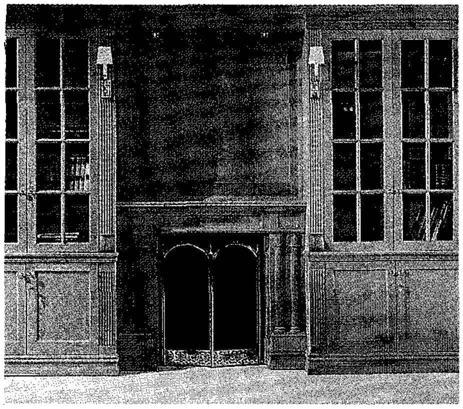
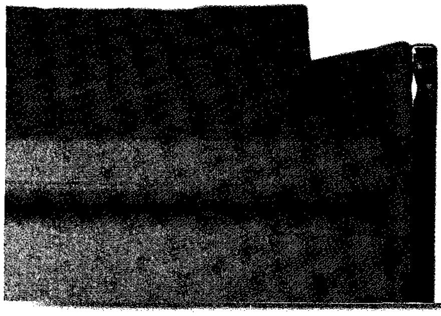
EMPIRE SAFE (ABOVE), LITTLE WOLF CABINET SHOP (RIGHT), CARLYLE CONVERTIBLES (BELOW).

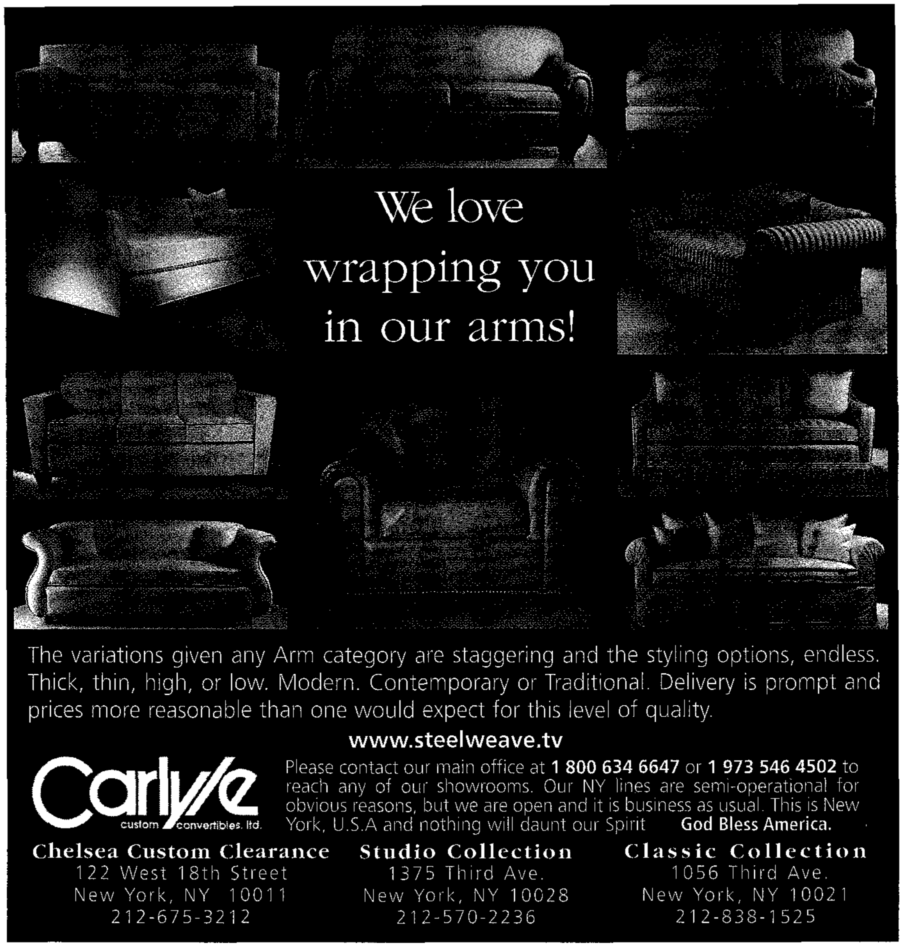


the plasma tv predicament



Little Wolf Cabinet Shop, a family business specializing in custom woodworking since 1956, answers the 50-year-old design question: What do you do with the TV? According to John Wolf, vice president, the modern take on the quandary, is how to aesthetically house the new plasma television sets. "Worry no more," says Wolf. "Because these TVs are so thin, we have a whole lot of flexibility. No longer are we—or our clients—forced to work around a big, bulky, empty box," states Wolf. His craftsmen work in all types of woods and mouldings, for both designers and retail clients. "The thin TVs fit snugly into armoires, bookcases, and library settings," reports Wolf. And what are the most contemporary clients doing with their TVs? "Not hiding them, that's for sure!" says Wolf with a chuckle. "They're losing the big painting over the mantel and hanging the TV right on the wall!" *Little Wolf Cabinet Shop, 1583 First Ave. at 82nd and 83rd streets, 734-1116 or 734-2120.*





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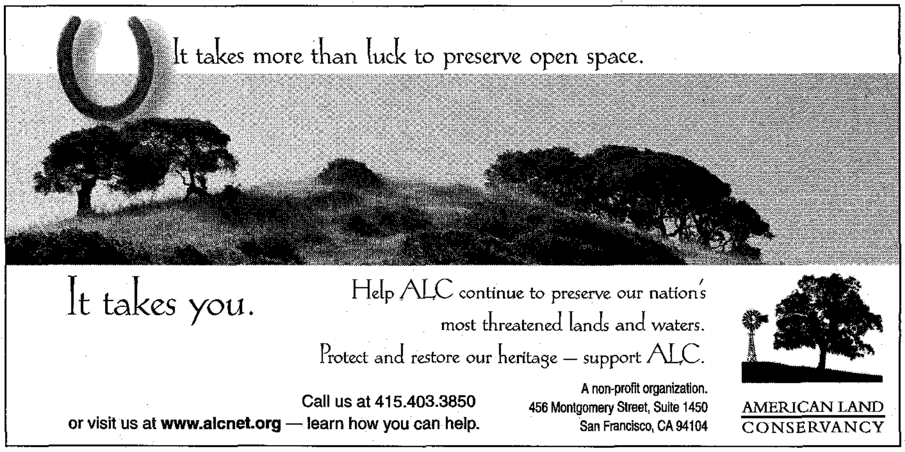

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MOVIES

All About the Benjamins

If you're looking to spend a Hamilton or two at the cinema this weekend, your best bet is this action thriller starring Ice Cube as a notorious Miami bounty hunter ensnared in a chaotic diamond heist. **(Opens March 8; see listing, page 92.)**

THEATER

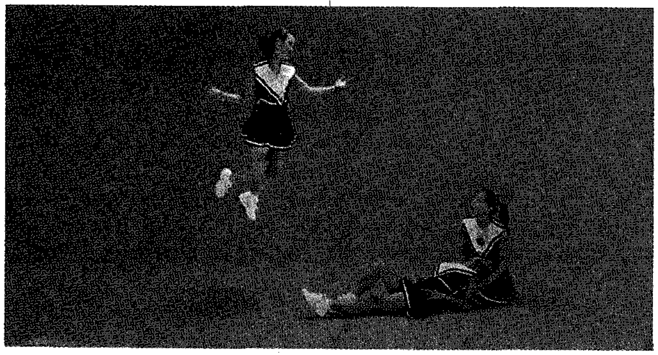
Sweet Smell of Success

We'll finally forgive John Guare for *Four Baboons Adoring the Sun* now that he's giving us this all-star musical adaptation of the delicious, vicious 1957 film. The ace Brian d'Arcy James stars as desperate-to-please yes-man Sidney Falco; John Lithgow is nefarious gossip columnist J. J. Hunsecker. **(In previews for a March 14 opening; see listing, page 100.)**

NIGHTLIFE

Cy Coleman and His Trio

He hasn't played a club date in years, but this week, the Tony-, Grammy-, and Emmy-winning composer of *City of Angels*, *Sweet Charity*, and *The Life* (not to mention standards like "Witchcraft") takes over Joe's Pub behind his latest CD, *It Started With a Dream*. Two nights only; reserve fast. **(March 8 and 9; see listing, page 120.)**



BI, BI, BI: Luis Gispert's *Untitled (Three Asian Cheerleaders)*, at the Whitney.

DANCE

Seán Curran Company

Rounded out by a young, spirited ensemble, Curran's celebrated company premieres two new—and vastly different—pieces: The first, *Sonata*, looks at history as nothing more than a fable, and the second, *From the Ether, With Instinct*, was inspired by the eighties Scottish band Young Marble Giants. **(Begins Wednesday, March 6; see listing, page 119.)**

BOOKS

Media Unlimited

Subtitled *How the Torrent of Images and Sounds Overwhelms Our Lives*, the latest book from media critic and professor Todd Gitlin explores the effects of a society bombarded by shrill mediocrity—namely, too many pundits, critics, and tabloid outlets. **(Metropolitan Books; $25; in bookstores now. Gitlin reads on March 5; see listing, page 122.)**

***SWEET* DEALS:** Eric Gillett, Brian d'Arcy Jones, and Stacey Logan, at the Martin Beck.

RESTAURANTS

The Grand Central Oyster Bar & Restaurant

The shad are in—those sweet-fleshed fish with rich roe, once a Hudson Valley staple every spring, now a rare treat. The Oyster Bar is featuring four shad and shad-roe specials in the coming weeks, including sautéed Carolina shad fillet with roasted-garlic crust. **(Grand Central Terminal, lower level; to reserve, call 212-490-6650.)**

ART

Whitney Museum's 2002 Biennial

It's the largest Biennial in twenty years, in numbers and physical scope: There are more than 100 artists this time around, and several installations are going off-site—into Central Park and out onto the Internet. **(Opens March 7; see listing, page 109.)**

TOP five

New-Music Events

Venture beyond Beethoven and Brahms, and you may be pleasantly surprised by what you hear—and the relatively modest ticket prices. See *page 119 for details and ticket information.*

1. The Da Capo Chamber Players

This program, called "My Twentieth Century," includes a world premiere by Martin Bresnick adapted from a poem by Tom Andrews, and other reflections on a freshly departed era. **(Miller Theatre, Columbia University.)**

2. eighth blackbird

The group—six friends from Oberlin College—makes its Lincoln Center debut with Aaron Jay Kernis's 1991 *The Four Seasons of Futurist Cuisine*, based on a thirties Italian manifesto. Guest narrator: celebrity chef Mario Batali. **(Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center.)**

3. Electronic X-Travaganza

The Kitchen presents three nights of electronic sounds from pioneers like David Behrman, who's reviving his 1973 *Homemade Synthesizer Music With Sliding Pitches*, and newcomers like the trip-hoppers Douce (listen for a love song to Robert De Niro in their mix). **(512 West 19th Street.)**

4. Composer Portraits

The Miller Theatre's series this week focuses on György Ligeti, the Transylvanian composer behind a piece for 100 metronomes. Don't be put off: The more traditionally orchestrated pieces are lovely and moving. **(Miller Theatre, Columbia University.)**

5. American Composers Orchestra

Now turning 25, ACO welcomes a new music director, Steven Sloane, to the podium. He'll conduct the world premiere of Stewart Wallace's *The Book of Five*, with British art-rockers Icebreaker. **(At Carnegie Hall.)** ALICIA ZUCKERMAN

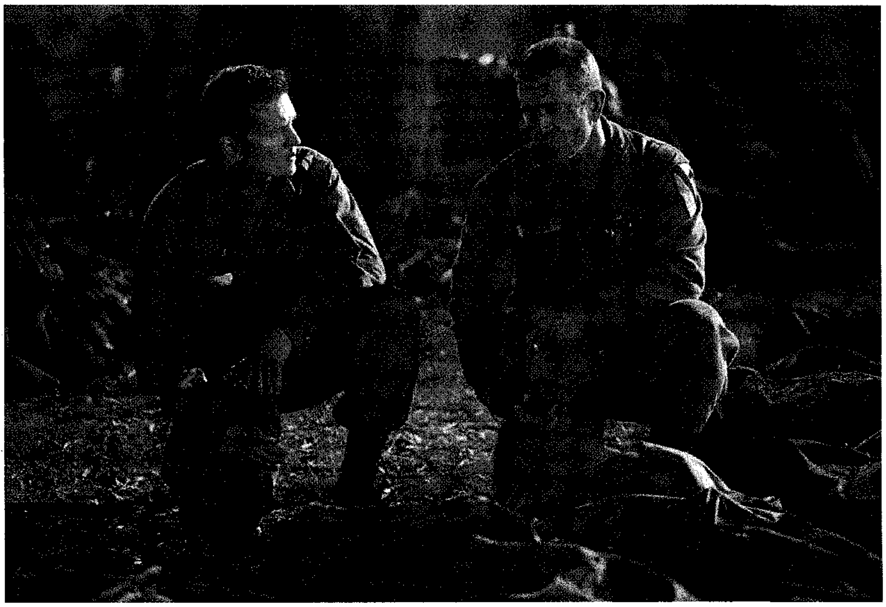
PHOTOGRAPHS: TOP, PAUL KOLNIK; BOTTOM, LUIS GISPERT/COURTESY MASSIMO AUDIELLO, NEW YORK.

MOVIES PETER RAINER

War Torn

We Were Soldiers wants to be a pure battle flick, but politics and Mel Gibson keep stealing center stage; *Borstal Boy* punishes the audience.

THE VIETNAM-THEMED **We Were Soldiers**, like the recent *Black Hawk Down*, presents itself as a "pure" war movie unencumbered by politics or the usual star turns. But politics intrudes anyway, the film does indeed have a star, Mel Gibson, and he is far from self-effacing. Having already made *Gallipoli*, *Braveheart* and *The Patriot*, he appears to be on a personal crusade to fight in all of history's wars. Writer-director Randall Wallace, who wrote *Braveheart* and *Pearl Harbor*, is no stranger to corn, and he goes in for a lot of husking here. The free-form camerawork, which is supposed to provide hyperrealism in the gritty battle scenes that make up most of the movie, keeps clashing with the tear-jerk, knee-jerk dramaturgy.



BOMBS AWAY: Barry Pepper, left, as Joe Galloway and Mel Gibson as Harold G. Moore in *We Were Soldiers.*

Based on the book *We Were Soldiers Once . . . And Young*, by Lieutenant General Harold G. Moore (depicted here by Gibson) and civilian war correspondent Joseph L. Galloway (Barry Pepper), the movie is about the first major conflict between U.S. soldiers and the North Vietnamese, which occurred in November 1965 when Moore and about 400 of his troops touched down at Landing Zone X-Ray in the Ia Drang Valley and found themselves surrounded by nearly 2,000 North Vietnamese soldiers. A near massacre ensued. Much is made of the fact that Moore's regiment, the First Battalion of the Seventh Cavalry, is the same as General George Armstrong Custer's. Before Moore embarks for battle, we see him—in between being a super-affectionate husband to his wife, Julie (Madeleine Stowe), and a loving daddy who leads his cuddly brood in prayer à la *Patriot*—poring over accounts of Custer's last stand. Although the film strives for evenhandedness in its depiction of the North Vietnamese, Wallace can't resist playing cowboys-and-Indians anyway. And his idea of evenhandedness is to cook the Vietnamese soldiers in the same corn oil as the rest of the film; and so, for example, we're given the obligatory shot of the scared combatant with a photo of a pretty girl tucked away in his diary. You can be sure that photo will make a reappearance.

We Were Soldiers
Directed by Randall Wallace; starring Mel Gibson and Madeleine Stowe.

Borstal Boy
Directed by Peter Sheridan; starring Shawn Hatosy.
See Movies listings for details.

We can also guess that the ID bracelet of a newborn baby, worn by the baby's father, Second Lieutenant Jack Geoghegan (Chris Klein), will provide a somber payoff, and that Moore's second-in-command, the gruff, old-school Sergeant Major Basil Plumley (Sam Elliott), will stick with his .45 pistols in battle instead of M-16 rifles. (For that cowboy effect.) Wallace can't resist showiness, even if it doesn't make sense. For example, he periodically cuts to scenes of the soldiers' wives at Fort Benning as they receive the news, initially delivered by a taxi courier, of their husbands' deaths. These sequences are the most chilling in the film, but then Wallace wraps up the movie with a moment in which Julie is aghast at the apparent arrival of a telegram informing her of her own spouse's demise. But instead of a telegram, it's Moore arriving by taxi. My question is: Wouldn't this devout family man have called ahead to let everyone know he was heading home?

Movies about real-life warfare and heroism and sacrifice have to be held to the same standard as movies about imaginary conflicts. To do anything less would be disrespectful to the men and women who endured the events in this film. *We Were Soldiers* is fitfully effective as a battle movie, and Mel Gibson does his rugged best to take center stage without seeming to. But the movie is self-righteous in a way that's frequently unseemly. Is it un-American to pick this movie apart? The people who made this one seem to think it's our civic duty to applaud.

IN **Borstal Boy**, LOOSELY BASED ON BRENdan Behan's memoir and starring Shawn

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHEN VAUGHAN.

Hatosy, the young Irish scamp is generally so well-behaved that you spend much of the movie trying to spot telltale traits of the legendarily raucous, poetry-spouting, Guinness-chugging writer he would become. This portrait of the artist as a young man leaves out the artist; what we get instead is a fairly conventional rendering of Behan's three years at an East Anglia borstal, a reform school for juvenile offenders, where he was sent at the age of 16 after being nabbed in Liverpool with explosives provided by the IRA. The point of the movie, which was directed by Peter Sheridan, is that Behan wasn't really a dyed-in-the-wool Republican, and that the borstal experience tenderized his hatred of the British. None of this violates the letter of Behan's book, but missing is its spirit, its ribald, full-throated humor. Sheridan has wanted to make a movie about Behan for many years—at one time, Sean Penn was involved—but *Borstal Boy* doesn't carry the force of obsession. Sheridan has a rather dewy imagination: Behan's artistic flowering is depicted in a scene where he recites his Gaelic poetry to the adoring daughter (Eva Birthistle) of the borstal's benevolent governor (Michael York); his bisexuality is dramatized in tentative, smoochy scenes with fellow offender and all-around good guy Charlie (Danny Dyer), who's English *and* Jewish.

In reality, Brendan Behan left the borstal in 1941 only to return to jail after shooting at a police officer in Dublin, and this was not the last time he was imprisoned. Sheridan's Behan, on the other hand, seems charted for another course entirely; returning to Ireland during wartime, he ambles into the mists like someone who has a rosy future all mapped out for him. The rosiness isn't meant to be ironic; we are not supposed to think of the rages and contentious fame that ensued before Behan died at 41 after collapsing in a Dublin bar. Behan's coming-of-age, as depicted here, is intended as a balm to the writer's memory. For all its triteness, Sheridan's sentimentality has its poignancy: This adolescent boy is all set up to live out a halcyon life he'll never have.

JOSH HARTNETT PLAYS A WINSOME STUD WHO forgoes sex during Lent in **40 Days and 40 Nights**, a teen pic that sets out to demonstrate that life is about more than having sex. Inadvertently—I think—it ends up showing us just the opposite. As if we didn't already know. ■

Peter Rainer's reviews can be read at nymetro.com/archive/rainer.

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Love (Dis)Connection

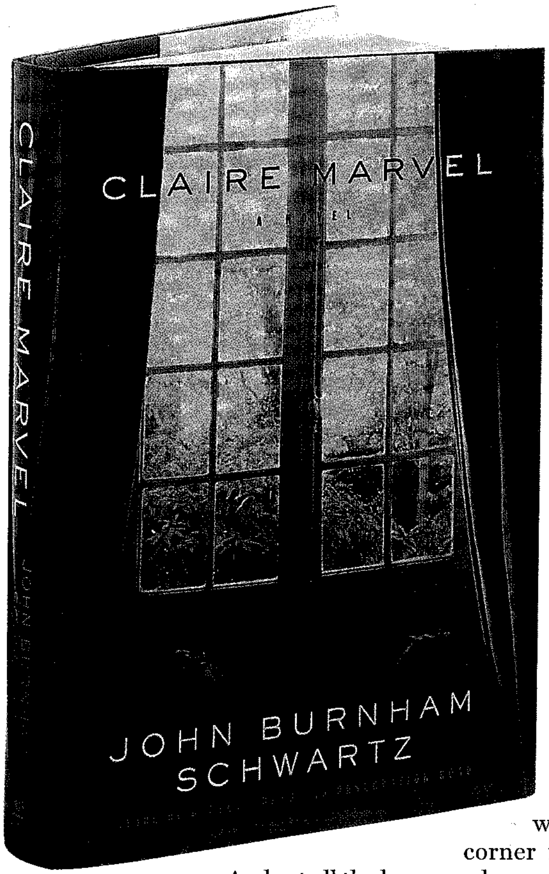
John Burnham Schwartz's new novel has plenty of psychological insight, but the central love story leaves a lot to be desired; Chinese writer Da Chen sets out for a new life in the West.

THE INTERESTING THING about erotic obsession is that the obsessors tend to be a great deal more fascinating than their beloveds. This is particularly true when it comes to literary lovers: You suspect that ten minutes in Dante's presence would be sheer (as it were) heaven, whereas even five with his beloved Beatrice would probably bore you into a coma. Ditto for everyone from Gustave von Aschenbach in "Death in Venice" to Humbert Humbert in *Lolita*. What's fascinating to us is not the object (whose allure is always a projection of something inside the lover) but the subject, the obsession itself. (Which is, after all, a hugely magnified version of what romantic love is: just plain crazy.) It's no accident that novels about obsession are generally told from the point of view of the lovers. Do you really care what little Tadzio thought of the strange guy who kept following him around Venice?

John Burnham Schwartz's third novel wants to be about such an obsession. **Claire Marvel** follows the glum career of one Julian Rose. It starts on a rainy day in 1985 when, as a nondescript Harvard political-science grad student, Julian literally runs into the beautiful, moody art historian Claire. From then on, he's unable to think of anything else. The bulk of the novel is meant to convey how the thought of her derails the next decade and a half of his life, during which the "invisible threads" that connect them are strained by an exhausting series of false starts, breakups, passionate reunions, and marriages to other people. Some of the deflections are comic (Claire runs off with Julian's Reagan-worshiping, Beltway-insider thesis adviser), but most are tragic, like Claire's climactic flight to an isolated French hamlet where the two had enjoyed an idyll years before.

Claire Marvel
By John Burnham Schwartz.
Doubleday; 320 pages; $25.

Sounds of the River
By Da Chen.
HarperCollins; 336 pages;
$25.95.



And yet all the heavy breathing doesn't really affect you. In the grand tradition of obsessor-obsessee novels, Claire is a cipher, consisting of not much but a "refined nose," full lips, long brown hair, and moods that are less intriguing than wearying. The disaster here is that Julian is equally dull from first to last. (In this bildungsroman, there's not a whole lotta bildung going on.) Schwartz's previous book, *Reservation Road*, about a young father's search for the hit-and-run driver who killed his son, ventured boldly if not always convincingly into some interesting psychological spaces. Not surprisingly, the best thing in the new book is the delicately observed relationship between the dour hero and his dour textbook-editor father. ("What bound our love," Julian realizes at one point, "were not our successes but our failures.") The problem here is that every relationship in *Claire Marvel*—between Julian and his parents, between Julian and the Machiavellian thesis adviser, between Julian and a troubled student at the prep school where he ends up teaching—turns out to be more textured, more authentic, than the one the book's supposed to be about.

Indeed, instead of penetrating to the heart of the connection between drab Julian and the sulky, impetuous Claire, Schwartz ends up writing around it. There are some flashbacks clearly meant to provide sudden glimpses of the characters' inner lives and neuroses, but they're awkwardly inserted and feel worked-up rather than organic. (Julian and Claire always seem to be just around the corner from a family vacation home where a beloved pet traumatically died.) And there are lots of compensatory adjectives; it would be hard to find a recent novel that offers more overwrought verbiage. Claire's yellow umbrella is a "thin sunlike carapace," the lovers' arms are "silent benedictions," red wax is like "an old prostitute's lipsticked mouth," and winter daylight "is as scarce as wartime rations." This is deeply, deeply phony writing. I doubt Schwartz, who's in his thirties, has ever laid eyes—or anything else, for that matter—on an old prostitute's lipsticked mouth, let alone on a wartime ration. "Wartime rations" in particular suggests how much of this book is secondhand, recycled from forties Hollywood weepies.

This is unfortunate, because the author is capable of producing telling effects. There's a wonderful description of Ju-

PHOTOGRAPH BY DASHA WRIGHT EWING.

lian's childhood home on the Upper West Side, lined with old textbooks "long since revised, their figures and theories and declarations no longer sound"; that tells you more about the failed aspirations of Rose *père* than 320 pages of slavering over Claire's liquid beauty. By the end of the book, when Claire has disappeared and Julian conveniently finds the diaries she's left behind (note to book editors: Please stop allowing authors to do this!), you just don't care about the revelations they may or may not contain. It's odd but typical of this book and its star-crossed lovers that these final pages provide an ending but no climax. "Sometimes," Claire's best friend tells Julian, early on in the affair, "watching you two fail to connect makes me want to scream." Readers are likely to feel the same way.

SCHWARTZ'S DEBUT NOVEL, *BICYCLE DAYS*, was about an American discovering himself in the Far East; Da Chen's absorbing and moving new memoir, **Sounds of the River**, is about a Chinese boy desperately making his way West. Da's previous book, *Colors of the Mountain*, deserved its acclaim. The author's tale of growing up rather precariously during the Cultural Revolution—as the descendant of landowners, he and his family were constantly humiliated and often in peril—was smoothly written and beautifully observed.

The new memoir picks up where the earlier one left off, as Da leaves his little village of Yellow Stone for Beijing and a university degree in English. The ensuing narrative is as irresistible as it is familiar: a lonely hero, armed with talent and no money, trying to make it in the big city. What makes this vivid coming-of-age story so worthy is not so much the lively and amusing anecdotes of university or city life (at one point, Da uses Sidney Sheldon to teach English; at another, a professor solemnly instructs his English students in the correct usages of *fuck*) or the often lush descriptions of life in Beijing (the "trees sang greenly their Western melody") but a bracingly wry self-awareness that gives traction to a story that could be cloying but is instead funny, exciting, and moving. In the final pages, when Da departs from Yellow Stone once more, this time for Nebraska and "a big school named Union in a big city named for a bigger-than-life, slave-freeing president," he has tears in his eyes; chances are that you will, too. ■

Daniel Mendelsohn's reviews can be read at nymetro.com/archive/mendelsohn.

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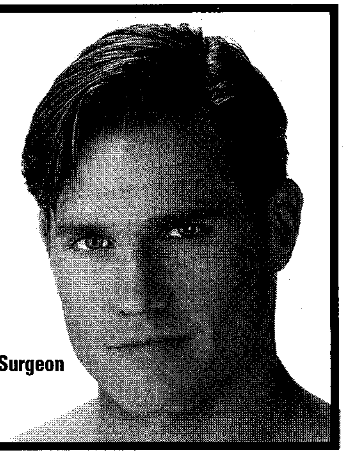

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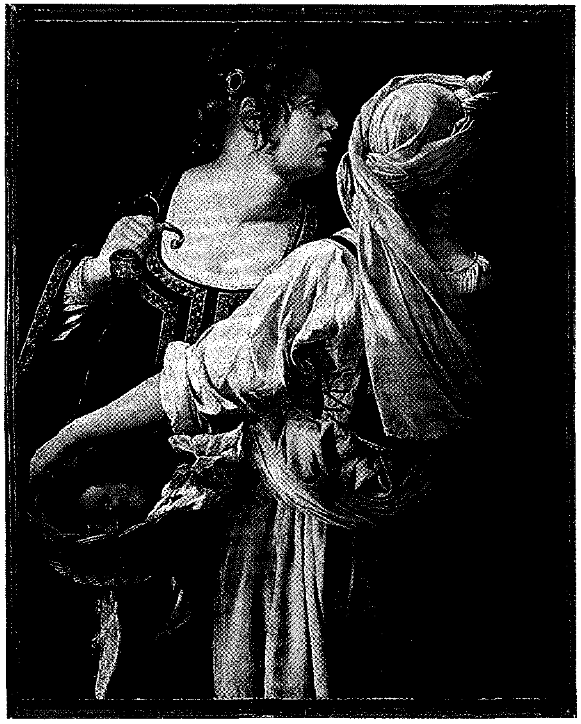
Daughter Knows Best

In the Met's exhibition of the paintings of the father-and-daughter Gentileschis, it's Artemisia—a centuries-ahead-of-her-time proto-feminist—who steals the show.

ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI (1597–1652) is a larger-than-life figure. Not only does her biography read like an opera, but she has become the matron saint of woman artists in Western culture. While a young and beautiful virgin, she was raped by a friend of her father's and had to endure the subsequent trial of the rapist. She circulated among the great figures of the period: Galileo was her friend. As a young painter, she became her artist father's disciple and struggled to emerge from his shadow. Against almost insuperable odds, she made herself an important artist—centuries ahead of her time—addressing subjects that today reflect powerful feminist themes. No artist has created a stronger or more determined heroine than her Judith, who unflinchingly decapitates the enemy general Holofernes while blood spurts in jets over her dress. Artemisia Gentileschi makes such a perfect cultural symbol, in fact, that one suspects she might be overrated as an artist.

HEAD GAMES: Artemisia Gentileschi's *Judith and Her Maidservant* (ca. 1618–19).



The current show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, **Orazio and Artemisia Gentileschi: Father and Daughter Painters in Baroque Italy**, provides a wonderful opportunity to assess her achievement. Organized by Judith Mann of St. Louis, Rossella Vodret of Rome, and Keith Christiansen of New York, the exhibit contains 51 works by Orazio and 32 by Artemisia. For much of his early life, her father, Orazio Gentileschi (1563–1639), was a journeyman painter. Then he saw the light—in the form of Caravaggio's dramatic chiaroscuro—and became one of that master's most resourceful followers. Scholars and admirers of Baroque painting will enjoy studying Orazio's work and sorting out the many interconnections between father and daughter. But modern interest will inevitably concentrate upon Artemisia. Does she transcend the influence of her father and her contemporaries? Can she sustain the weight of our expectations?

Orazio and Artemisia Gentileschi: Father and Daughter Painters in Baroque Italy
At the Metropolitan Museum of Art; through 5/12.
See Art listings for details.

The answer is that she can and did in her best work. Although Artemisia was susceptible to the cross currents of her period—and sometimes seemed to drift in and out of focus as an artist—she created a number of astonishing pictures that went well beyond her father's style and placed her in the front rank. What distinguished such work was its personal urgency: It looked necessary, not just talented. In that famous painting *Judith Slaying Holofernes,* she presented Judith and her maidservant pinning down the soldier much as a rapist renders a woman helpless. Yet the picture's power stems from more than this role reversal and reflection of her own experience. It comes from a deeper determination, finally moral in character, to see violence clearly—to stare down the hard facts.

Her treatment of the visceral was achievement enough, but the great surprise for me was that Artemisia has such expressive range. Other versions she did of Judith and Holofernes have a completely different mood. The handsomely painted and composed *Judith and Her Maidservant,* for example, more quietly honored the strength of women who join together in a noble purpose. (Judith's full-throated neck, which sings with life, offers a wonderful contrast to the head of the decapitated Holofernes.) And Artemisia was not interested only in warrior women. In her versions of *Susanna and the Elders,* she composed scenes of women as the victims of gloating men. She did not shy from painting the nude and understood that the subject had many dimensions; she created both idealized images of the female body and more realistic assertions of the facts of the flesh. Not least, this purveyor of dramatic images of female righteousness took a pensive interest in female guilt. Artemisia painted several pictures of the repentant Mary Magdalene, including one where she has fallen asleep after her labors over Christ's body. Often, the women she depicted bore some resemblance to her. In *Self-Portrait As a Lute Player,* a painting of lush and shadowy harmonies of color, Artemisia presented herself as a sexy but melancholy woman who has seen so much: She arches a questioning eye at the world as her elegant fingers strum the lute. ■

Mark Stevens's reviews can be read at nymetro.com/archive/stevens.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART.

Theater | John Simon

Necessary Targets

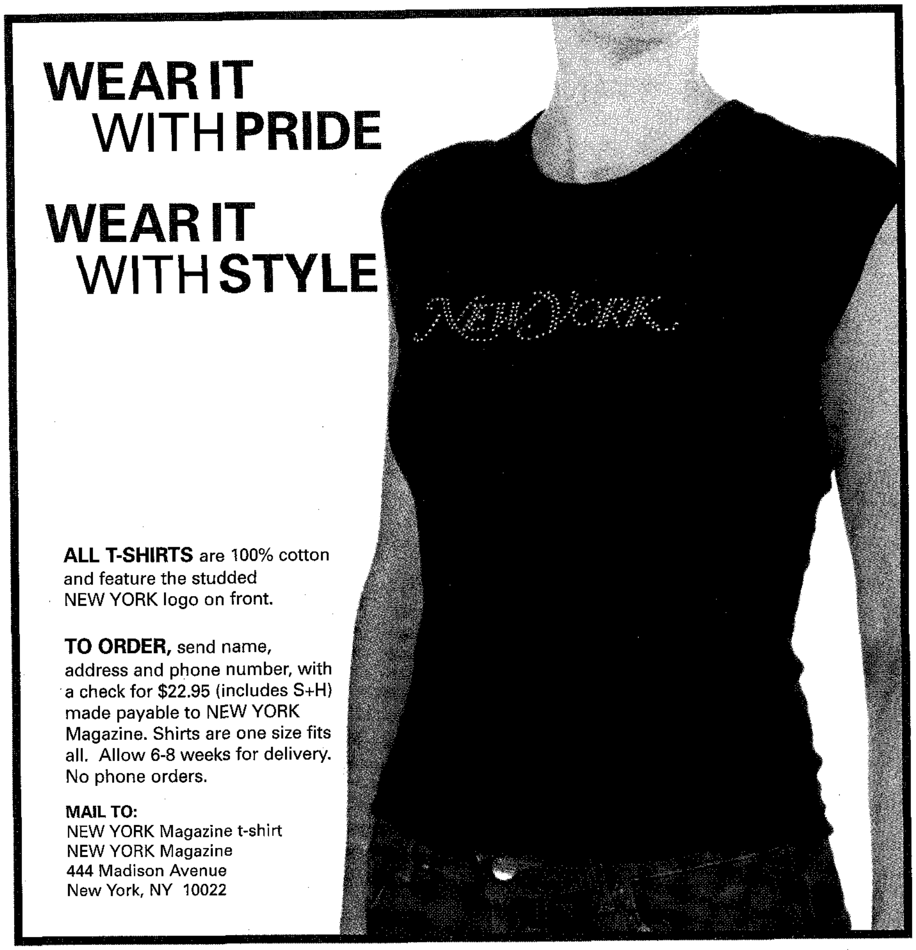
By Eve Ensler, directed by Michael Wilson; starring Diane Venora and Shirley Knight.

IN EVE ENSLER'S *THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES,* there is one threnody attributed to a Bosnian rape victim. Having seen newspaper pictures of violated Bosnian women, Ensler knew "I had to go there. I had to meet these women." She spent two months in Croatia and Pakistan interviewing Bosnian women refugees. From this came the aforementioned monologue and, now, the 100-minute intermissionless play **Necessary Targets.**

We are in a refugee camp, with two American women—the middle-aged psychiatrist J.S. and the young trauma counselor Melissa—ministering to five Bosnian refugees. That these five are at best types, at worst contrivances, is bad enough; that the two Americans are pawns is worse yet. The Bosnians are Jelena, a cook and provider whose unseen husband, unhinged by the war, gives her not sex but black eyes. Also Zlata, a now unemployed doctor, embittered and cynical. Next Seada, a beauty whose kinfolk were murdered before her eyes, and she herself raped; deranged, she carries about a spurious baby. Further Azra, an old peasant woman, grieving equally for her abducted cow and her confiscated beef salami. Finally Nuna, a spoiled rich girl, who has seen too many American movies and speaks idiomatic, unaccented English, slang included.

All five, even the peasant Azra, speak far too good, un-Bosnian English. "Join the club," says Zlata sarcastically. Azra laments, "Bosnia is over. Bosnia is a dream." Jelena is "waiting to get drunk . . . smashed, shit-faced"; her husband, "this mutation of war, could not invade my happiness . . . my great dance under the stars." Nuna recalls her mother escaping in her Guccis: "I had to drag, like, seven trillion bags to the camp." In her final aria, Zlata even makes English wordplay: "Cruelty is boring, boring into . . . the part of you that goes away." These women are as factitious as their English.

Unreal, too, is the simplistic plot device whereby the snooty, overdressed J.S., ready to quit, becomes a true friend of the Bosnians, while Melissa, at first so understanding, leaves them in the lurch for further exotic victims in Chechnya. This is the typical schematic reversal—Hotspur and Hal flatfootedly rendered. But at least none of these women rhapsodizes like the Bosnian in *Vagina Monologues:* "My vagina was green, water soft pink fields," etc. Under Michael Wilson's direction, Diane Venora and Mirjana Jokovic are outstanding; the others, especially Shirley Knight, are good, and only Maria Thayer (Nuna) is a disaster. ■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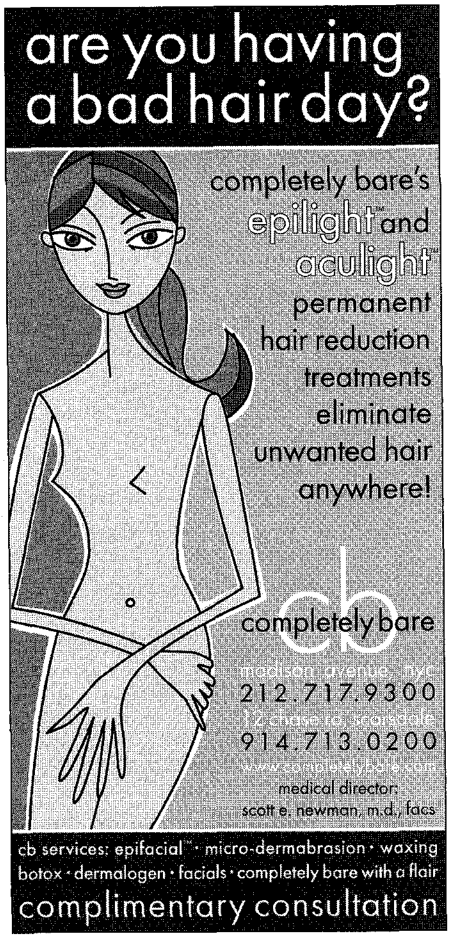
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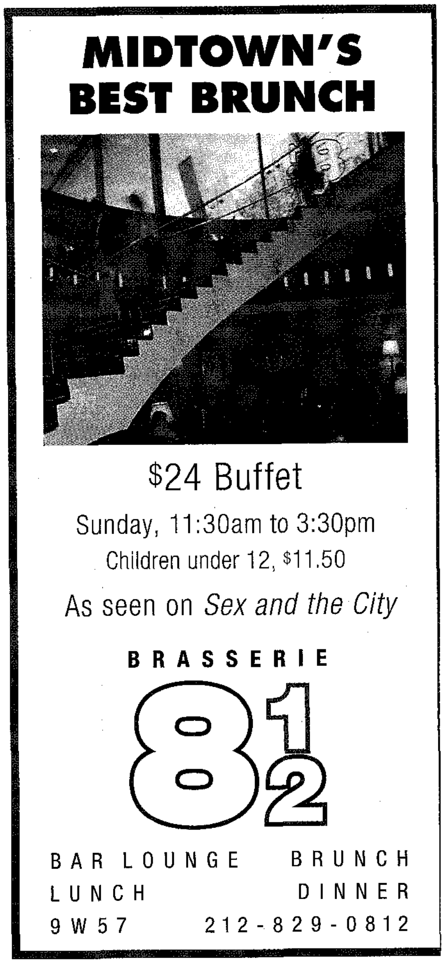
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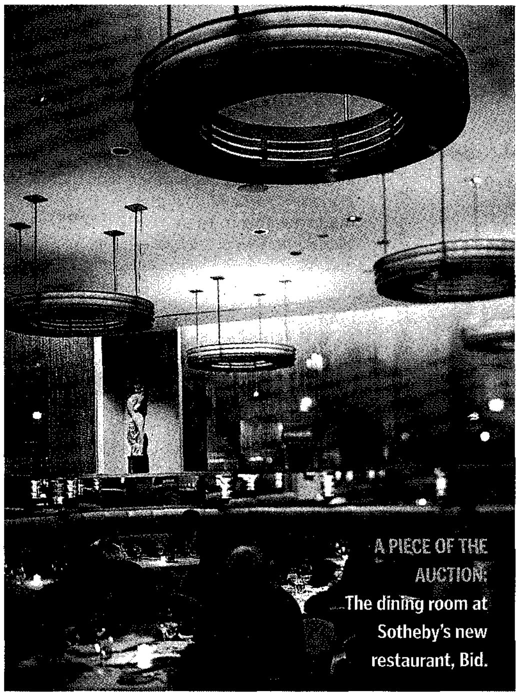
Bid 'Em Up

It took a while for the critic's paddle to start waving happily, but Bid—located in the bowels of Sotheby's—has raised the bar and brought fine cuisine to the world of fine art.



A PIECE OF THE AUCTION: The dining room at Sotheby's new restaurant, Bid.

IN FINE DINING, AS IN LIFE, CERTAIN eccentric concepts can take time to find an audience. The sandwich was one such concept; putting a gourmet restaurant in the basement of a legally challenged British auction house is another. **Bid**, the new establishment at the bottom of the sleekly monolithic Sotheby's building, has been open for several months now. I dimly recall that on my first visit there, many evenings ago, the fluorescent lobby had the faint, plasticated smell of a corporate hotel. The restaurant's menu—pricey short ribs, a big, chalky version of cod and brandade, a dessert tart made from warm Stilton cheese—seemed a little incongruous in this stiff, uptown setting. So did the overly beige, lounge-lizard décor (bead curtains, tufted leather banquettes), which reminded me of a lavish Admiral's Club lounge in some vaguely dated Continental airport.

The room at Bid still looks that way to me, although I'm curiously comforted by it now. Maybe that's because my wife has declared Bid to be her favorite new restaurant (she has a fondness for all things beige), or because several artsy downtown friends have been sneaking uptown to sip fancy martinis at the dimly lit bar and ogle the soon-to-be-auctioned art on the restaurant walls.

More likely, though, it's thanks to the work of executive chef Matt Seeber. Seeber is a former acolyte of Tom Colicchio (who's listed as a "consultant" on this project), and like his mentor, he cultivates a kind of rustic elegance in his cooking. In the beginning, his recipes seemed more rustic than elegant. Lately, though, Seeber has come into his own. On a recent visit to Bid, I began my meal with two nodules of creamy foie gras, folded in green cabbage with razor-thin wafers of black truffle. This elegantly satisfying dish (plucked from the $70 tasting menu) was served on a bed of sweet, vinegary flageolet beans and bacon, which you slurped down with a spoon. Then came a tender fillet of guinea hen, wrapped in a tube of crispy pancetta, with glazed winter vegetables (turnips, mushrooms, Brussels sprouts) piled on the side over a mound of tender confit. My wife ordered the black sea bass with a light rice-flake crust, served in a pool of broth with bok choy, tomatoes, and saffron. The smooth Asian flavors complemented the mildness of the fish, while the rice flakes gave the dish an exotic confectioner's crunch.

Bid
1334 York Avenue, near
71st Street (212-988-7730).

"I thought you didn't like this place," whispered my wife between enthusiastic little bites. I had to note sheepishly that the roasted cod wasn't as chalky as I'd remembered it, and it looked tidier, sitting atop a light brandade mixed with almonds, zucchini, and bits of lemon. Among the other seafood dishes, we liked the silvery appetizer of pickled sardines and the house lobster chowder, which is peach-colored and stocked with bluefoot mushrooms and squares of smoky bacon. My quail appetizer was perfectly tender, though cut in tiny mouse-size pieces, and our communal serving of potato gnocchi (as big as golf balls) was smothered in mushrooms and a deliciously rich, foie gras–infused broth. The short ribs (served with little planks of sirloin and a mix of truffle-flavored faro and tripe) were fine, though, like most things in a joint where the cheapest entrée costs $25, still overpriced.

Not that this seemed to bother the crowd at Bid, a genteel mix of auction-house patrons and well-heeled Sutton Place grandees with iridescent winter tans. They swilled luminous, expensive cocktails ($15 for my Isle of Skye Rusty Nail) and sipped an interesting selection of equally pricey wines. If you're on a budget, however, save up for the restaurant's superior desserts. Pastry chef Chika Tillman's version of bread pudding is a dense slab of faintly eggy brioche, served with a scoop of coconut sorbet. There's also a warm chocolate tart, encased in a light pastry crust that melts away when you prick it with your fork. Cheese nuts will enjoy the cheesecakelike fromage blanc island, although my favorite was the button-size apple tarte Tatin, served with apple-green shavings of granita and a pinkish peppercorn ice cream. I may have sampled this delicious dish on my first visit to Bid. But then again, maybe not. It was a long time ago, after all, and in fine dining, as in life, memory is a tricky, fragile thing. ■

Bid, Lunch, Monday through Friday, noon to 2:30 P.M.; dinner, Monday through Thursday, 5:30 till 10 P.M., Friday and Saturday till 11 P.M. Appetizers, $12 to $17; entrées, $25 to $32. All major credit cards.

To read restaurant reviews in advance, plus the latest openings and buzz, subscribe to the Restaurant Insider at newyorkmetro.com/newsletters. **Previous weeks' restaurant reviews** can be read online at nymetro.com/archive/restaurants.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY KENNETH CHEN.

CORPORATE: ENTERTAINING

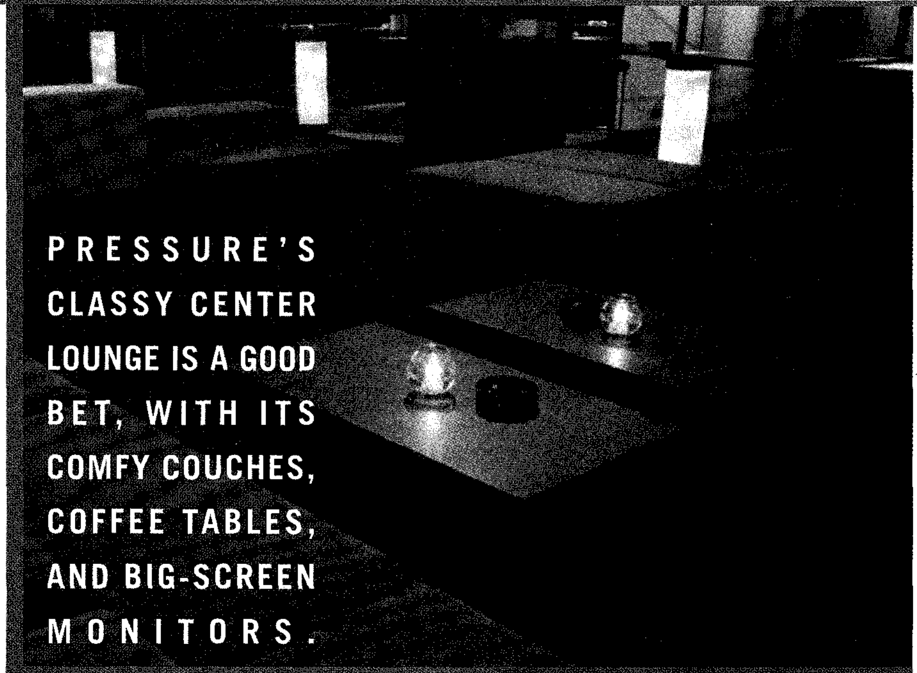
IN NEW YORK, EVEN BUSINESS IS PLEASURE. WHERE ELSE CAN YOU FIND SUCH A STAGGERING SELECTION OF COOL VENUES FOR ALL FORMS OF CORPORATE ENTERTAINING? WHETHER IT'S A POWER LUNCH AT AN A-LIST TABLE, OR A COMPANY MELÉE FOR 500 IN A HIP LOUNGE, THE CITY HAS THE RIGHT SPOT FOR YOU. AND WITH WARM WEATHER JUST AHEAD, YOU CAN EVEN SET UP SHOP IN A SIDEWALK CAFE OR A VERDANT BACKYARD GARDEN.

Right on Cue

HAVE YOU HEARD THE BUZZ ABOUT PRESSURE (110 University Place, 352-1161; www.pressurenyc.com), a hot billiards lounge that's racking up rave notices in its first year? A premier event space, PRESSURE was formerly a pressurized tennis bubble. PRESSURE can accommodate anywhere from 20 to 500 for private functions, or as many as 1,000, if you add the cool bowling hall, Bowlmor Lanes, on the two floors below. For sizable groups of up to 500, PRESSURE's classy center lounge is a good bet, with its comfy couches, coffee tables, and big-screen monitors – good for power-point presentations, films, or other corporate use. For smaller get-togethers, there are six private rooms that open up to the lounge, four of them

Funky ambience and high-tech sounds at PRESSURE.

Creative Services Director: Beverly Hood Allen Editor: Christy Casamassima Creative: Wink Creative Writer: David Butwin Research: Lory Conklin



PRESSURE'S CLASSY CENTER LOUNGE IS A GOOD BET, WITH ITS COMFY COUCHES, COFFEE TABLES, AND BIG-SCREEN MONITORS.

Ample space for even the largest corporate soirees at PRESSURE.

West-Side inventive Italian at Restaurant 222.

equipped with a pool table and a monster 42-inch plasma TV. There's also a VIP lounge for 10 to 30, and a screening room for 180. This sublime pool hall, throbbing with fiber-optic lighting, has 21 pool tables, all of them available to even the smallest party in a private room. PRESSURE's low-pressure staff will set up any catering menu you choose. Nosh on crab cakes, grilled baby lamb chops, chicken sate. If you want to eat buffet-style, there are illuminated banquet tables. The VIP room, with its medieval decor and antique dining table, creates a colorful dining area. PRESSURE rocks on weekends, so private groups are best served on weeknights – Thursday is popular, Monday is even easier to swing. Some corporations choose to rent the whole complex, PRESSURE and Bowlmor, for an entire day, letting clients flow back and forth at will between the two venues.

Mykonos in Midtown

BARELY TWO YEARS OLD, Avra (141 E. 48th St., 759-8550; www.avrany.com) is already a magnet for neighborhood publishing, financing, and advertising execs who come to power-lunch and lap up the zest of this seafood specialist which swims with Greek-seaside charm. Book a table for your clients or rent the private Wine Room in back, with space for 80. Private groups aren't limited to a special banquet menu – they eat the Greek-Mediterranean house specialties, such as whole fish (loup de mer, arctic char), grilled octopus, steaks and chops, and lobster ravioli. The mood is festive, and the decor bright: pastel-shaded Mediterranean. On mild days and nights, a group of 50 can take over the entire pavement patio with its oversized umbrellas.

Avra attracts a hearty power-lunch crowd.

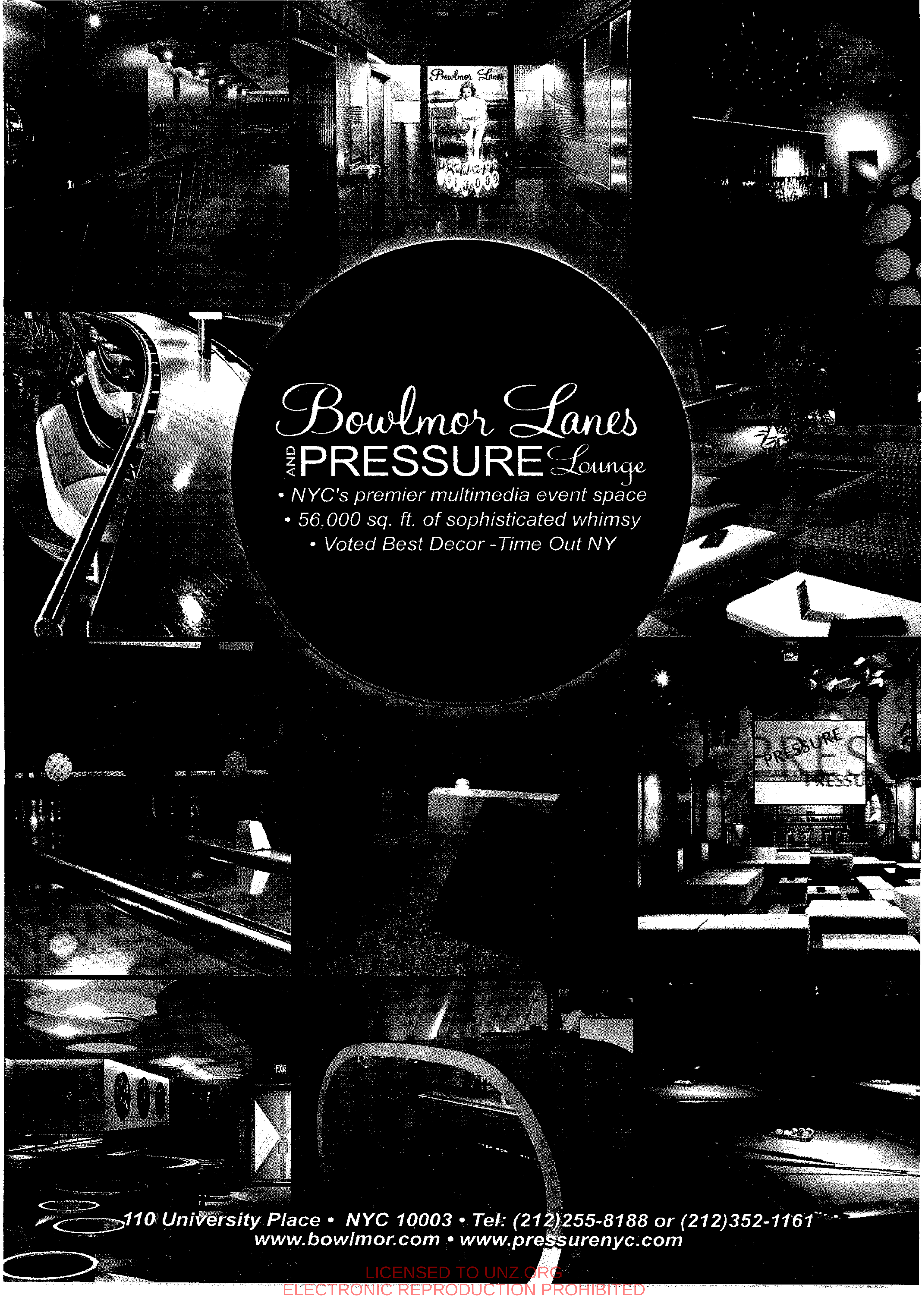
Too-Too-Good

BREAK AWAY TO THE neighborhood confines of Restaurant 222 (222 W. 79th St., 799-0400; www.restauranttwotwotwo.com) on the Upper West Side. The menu is new American with French and Italian flavors – honest but creative dishes like Colorado lamb, breast of duck from Vermont ("beautiful, tender, not like that inedible Muscovy duck everybody serves," says host Frank Valenza). His wife the owner, Marlies Jung, has done the skylighted-townhouse room with her collected antique plates, snow globes, and designer Barbie® dolls; there's dark-oak paneling and peach-damask linen. Companies rent the place for 20 to 40 people, with an open bar and a liberal choice of menu items.

Pool Party

NO PRIVATE PARTY IS TOO BIG for Slate (54 W. 21st St., 989-0096; www.slate-ny.com), the sleek billiards hall with elegant eats and catchy tunes in the heart of Chelsea. With 34 pool tables on two levels and a smashing 54-foot bar that seats 100, Slate (named for the ultra-smooth stone that lies beneath a pool table's green felt) will accommodate groups of 5 to 700. In this dramatic remake of the former Chelsea Bar & Billiards, you can eat the contemporary comfort food of executive chef Oscar Galindo and consulting chef Stephen Kalt. There are Baja fish tacos, New Mexico steak fingers, tuna nicoise sandwiches, po' boys, fried calamari salad, and a make-your-own-taco bar. Groups can eat anywhere – in the lounges,

Slate is Chelsea's favorite party spot.



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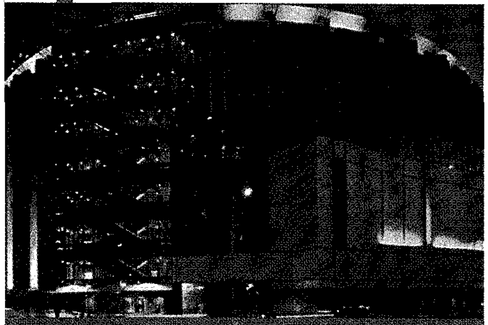
at slate tables in the dining area, at the bar, or at raised chrome tables "poolside." Slate will tailor a party to your liking, starting with an open bar that offers a wide range of beer, wines, and cocktails. You may want a billiards tournament or instruction for your guests. "These little tournaments are an icebreaker and a teamwork-builder," says a Slate staffer. There's also a high-tech sound system and a DJ spinning top-40, R&B, dance, and hip-hop tunes.


Book a blowout at Madison Square Garden.

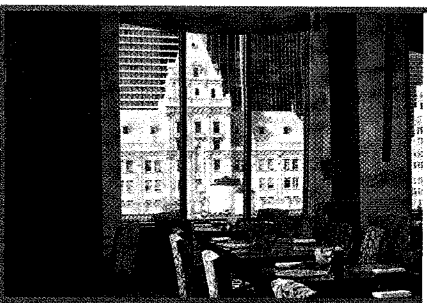
Garden Galas

IF YOU WANT TO PLAN A blowout of an event, book "The World's Most Famous Arena®," Madison Square Garden (4 Pennsylvania Plaza, Special Event Sales, 2nd floor, 465-6106; www.thegarden.com/rentthegarden), home of the Knicks and Rangers and center stage for topflight celebrities, conventions, and trade shows. You name it, the Garden will host it – conferences and conventions, banquets and receptions, graduations and bar/bat mitzvahs. For parties of 175 to 1,200 guests, any one of the Garden's main eateries will impress – the Play by Play Restaurant, The Club Restaurant, and The Terrace. You'll be eating where the world's top sports scribes have noshed for years, where all the name rock- and pop-music performers have hung out before going on stage. The food is tops, and the menus can be tailored to any taste or preference. Or think bigger: The Theater at Madison Square Garden is a must for large special events, seating 2,000 to 5,000, or 400 for a banquet. Just outside The Theater doors, an impressive lobby is popular for all kinds of receptions, including sit-down dining for 500. For a novel treat, schedule the Garden's All-Access Tour, a feature that never fails to wow customers. This behind-the-scenes look at the legendary arena rolls out the red carpet and shows how the magic happens. You never know what or whom you'll see. What you do know is that good things happen at The World's Most Famous Arena, where "Tailored Hospitality" is the headline event every night.

Book MSG for a party on a grand scale.

Hell's Kitchen Hideaway

NOT YET A YEAR OLD, CASCINA (647 Ninth Ave., 245-4422; www.cascinanyc.com) has stamped itself as a Hell's Kitchen mainstay. It's as warm and welcome as a dining and drinking nook in the middle of an Italian vineyard – which is what cascina means. Rustic, rosy-walled, and elegant, the dining room encloses a rounded brick oven, which turns out dishes like veal shank in Chianti, hand-crafted pizzas, and foccacia. Chef Cristiano Pera cooks with a Northern Italian sensibility, sparking it up with ginger, lemongrass, and other flavors. Cascina can accommodate 75 to 100 people for private affairs, but also does smaller parties – corporate functions, rehearsal dinners, film screenings, meetings, and fundraisers. The considerable wine list draws from the family's own vineyard in Italy's Piedmont region.


Rustic Cascina is a cozy Italian mainstay.

Way Above the Norm

Uptown dining and views at Above.

BUSINESS ALWAYS SEEMS TO go down better when you're up at Above (234 W. 42nd St., 642-2626), the airy 21st floor aerie in the Hilton Times Square Hotel. Both the Pinnacle Bar and dining room afford smashing uptown views over coppery-green roofs to gleaming skyscrapers, a sort of Gotham City touch. The food is innovative American, and it's best launched with the house drink specialty, a Pinnacle Blue Martini. You can book private functions in any of nine private rooms on the main level or the floor above. Or take the whole place for 200 people. Here in the heart of Broadway, Above does a brisk pre-theater business, and later in the evening it's a happy hangout for actor types dropping in for drinks after work.

Murray Hill Mainstay

STEP IN THE DOOR OF Rossini's (108 E. 38th St., special events call Nancy at 683-0135) and it's easy to see why regulars are drawn to this warm, clubby Italian mainstay in Murray Hill. Some of the steady diners – area building contractors and the like – do lunch two or three times a week. They like the big tables, roomy spacing and a menu that never gets old. Others retreat to the lounge and bar, set off from the dining room by a passageway, where they can enjoy a cigar with lunch and banter. The kitchen constantly varies or rotates the specialties, while always offering such staples as steaks, chops, and grilled fish. For groups of 50 or more, the entire lower half of the bi-level restaurant is bookable. Rossini's will tailor the menu to your liking, even for just 10 people. Schedule a solo pianist or small band; there's plenty of room to dance.

Rossini's, a Murray Hill favorite.

Walk in the Park

IMAGINE A SETTING THAT combines the sophisticated style of Manhattan and the chic informality of the Hamptons. Just steps off Fifth Avenue, The Boathouse in Central Park (East 72nd Street and Park Drive North, 517-2233) is an oasis of calm in the world's most vibrant city. There is quite simply no other venue that can compare to Manhattan's only lakeside restaurant. Recently renovated, The Boathouse is even more inviting than ever. Under the direction of Dean Poll, The Boathouse's gracious staff will work with you to create an affair that reflects your wishes. Chef Alan Ashkinaze will tailor a menu to suit your desires. On summer evenings, for example, corporate groups can enjoy the authentic clambakes and barbecues, surrounded by the English garden. For events, from 50 people and up, The Boathouse in Central Park is unquestionably an original choice for conducting business of all varieties in a tranquil, yet festive atmosphere.

Island oasis: The Boathouse in Central Park.

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Fare India

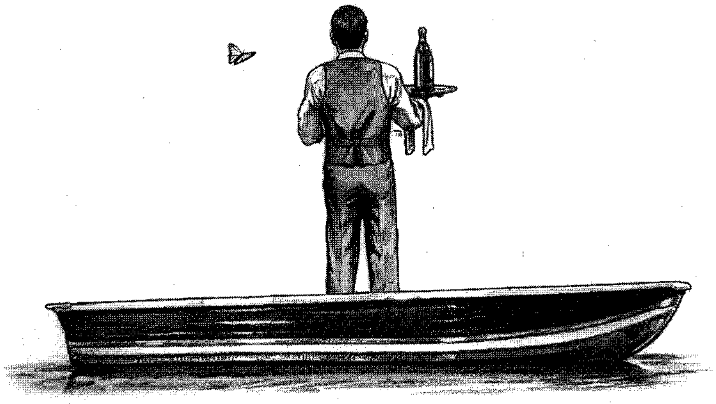
EVEN IF YOU DO LUNCH IN the office, Dawat Restaurant (210 E. 58th St., 355-7555; www.restaurant.com/dawat) has the answer. The highly rated Indian restaurant will deliver a lunch like no other, any courses you choose – appetizers, main dishes, exotic breads, desserts – and served on china, if that's the wish. Dawat's boss lady, Madhur Jaffrey, also an actress and cookbook author, has created a novel and wide-ranging menu. Regulars love the tandoori shrimp and chicken, a spicy, gingery Shrimp Bhuna, and Cornish Hen with green chilies. Ms. Jaffrey also prepares more than a dozen winning vegetarian dishes. Small confabs of up to 15 can take a large table in the sleekly designed Dawat dining room, and larger groups can hire the downstairs banquet hall which seats 60 to 70.

Private dining at Dawat.

Business and Beef

PRIME-AGED STEAKS AND manly sizzle are the big draws at Ben Benson's Steak House (123 W. 52nd St., 581-8888, banquets call Susan at 581-8390; www.benbensons.com), the legendary midtown steakhouse. Once you're a regular (Steinbrenner, Al Roker, Gov. Pataki,

Ben Benson's is a celeb-studded haven.



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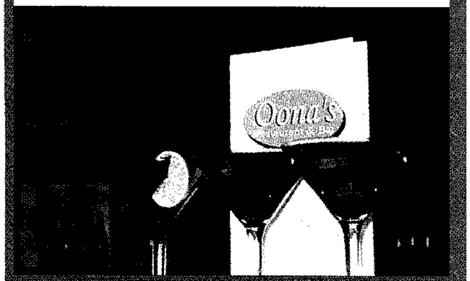
David Wells, Don Meredith, NHL comish Gary Bettman) you're a king and your name goes on a plaque or up in lights. Ask for a table on the front platform, where the steady clients dine, eat in the bar, where much wheeling and dealing gets done, or take a booth in back. The kitchen turns out prime steaks a half dozen ways; also chops, jumbo lobster, crab cakes, calves' liver, southern fried chicken. Some swear by the chicken potpie, beef stew, and chicken caesar. Finish off with homemade bread pudding. Benson's does a lot of corporate dinners midweek and closings left and right. Book the upstairs room, which holds 25 to 75 for a sit-down meal with a cocktail hour, or up to 125 for a cocktail party with its own bar. Private groups may dine from either the standard or a customized menu. No longer a males-only bastion, Benson's is scoring big with women from a variety of fields.

Oomph under the Awnings



Martini's galore at Oona's.

TAKE YOUR BUSINESS TO Oona's Restaurant & Bar (891 Eighth Ave., 956-6000; www.oonasrestaurant.com), a Theater District winner at the corner of 53rd Street (look for the red awnings), from the moment it opened. The bar was imported intact from Italy, the food is new American, the Apple Martini is legend. Fashion magazines love to rent the whole place, while smaller groups prefer to hide out in the little velvet-couch lounge by the bar, and twosomes will find work conducive in the heart of the warm, buzzing restaurant (a trendy boy-meets-girl place after work). Or book an outdoor table. The food (you eat, you don't dine here) is sirloin steaks and fries, tuna tartar, and stylish pizzas.

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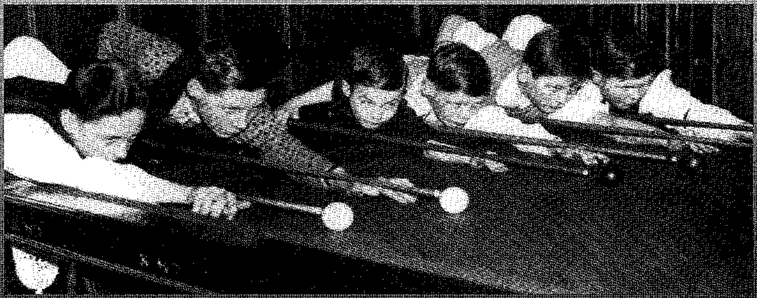

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Thank God for **BEN BENSON'S**. *This unassuming 20-year-old midtown-Manhattan steakhouse might just serve the greatest American meals in the U.S.A. Here's why:*

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4. The kitchen doesn't make mistakes. There's no overpaid celebrity chef back there, *just heat-hardened* pros who know how to work an 800-degree grill.
5. The wine list abounds with perfectly suited American cabernets and chardonnays. Who the hell needs gewürztraminer and viognier with a menu like BB's?
6. There are no puny one- and two-pound lobsters here. They start at three and go up from there: five, seven, sometimes ten.
7. The waiters are amiable and can shell those big lobsters in less than 40 seconds.
8. You can spot America's best red-meat-loving jocks.
9. The outdoor patio lets you ogle New York women as they stroll by.
10. The leakproof doggie bags, which sport a picture of BB's mascot, Rocky the bulldog. –JOHN MARIANI

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Scottish Pride

TEE IT UP AT ST. ANDREWS (120 W. 44th St., 840-8413; standrewsrestaurant@citysearch.com), a clubby steak and seafood house, which celebrates Scotland and its national passion, golf. Named for the legendary Scottish town and golf course, St. Andrews is popular at lunchtime with deal-doing media and lawyer types from the neighborhood. The bartenders wear kilts and the walls are lined with photos of the seaside links. Try the only Scottish haggis in town, or if you don't dare, the steaks and fish are first-rate and the raw bar is a consistent par-beater. St. Andrews does a brisk pre-theater business, but it's also a growing venue for corporate dining and dealing at dinner.

Elegant Scottish dining at St. Andrews.

My Casbah or Yours?

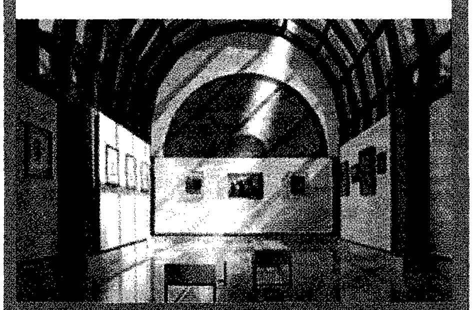
"COME TO MY CASBAH" IS the message of Opia (130 E. 57th St., 688-3939; www.opiarestaurant.com), a swank and exotic new restaurant that can satisfy any corporate need. You can rent out any of four rooms for smallish parties, or the whole restaurant which seats 200. If it's just a party of 20, take the Opia Den, a private lair with a Moroccan flavor – low couches and tables, padded walls, and sexy lighting. The corner room, all chartreuse and lilac, is another premier party space. The dining room is subdued, in a sultry Casablanca sort of way,

A Moroccan-inspired event at Opia.

with tall potted palms and tall arched ceilings. After-work groups also like to settle into the comfy front lounge for cocktails and appetizers. The menu is wide-ranging and eclectic – couscous with lamb shank, grilled Kobe beef-steaks; also sashimi, pastas, nifty little pizzas, and great burgers.

Towering View

THERE'S NO TOPPING THE views at the The Marmara-Manhattan (301 E. 94th St., 427-3100;www.marmara-manhattan.com), an extended-stay hotel with a sleek Rooftop Lounge and Terrace. It's just the spot for corporate parties, charity auctions, and private social gatherings. Guests like the feeling of escaping to this quiet Upper East Side neighborhood, far from the meddling crowd. And for private functions, the 360-degree views are nonpareil. The 32nd floor space, with its gleaming modern furnishings, can accommodate 75 in the lounge, a total of 120 if you also book the wraparound terrace. Catering must be arranged, but there's a handy on-site kitchen. On your way out, give The Gallery a look, a sunny lobby space fast becoming a forum for Manhattan's up-and-coming artists.



Gallery space at The Marmara-Manhattan.

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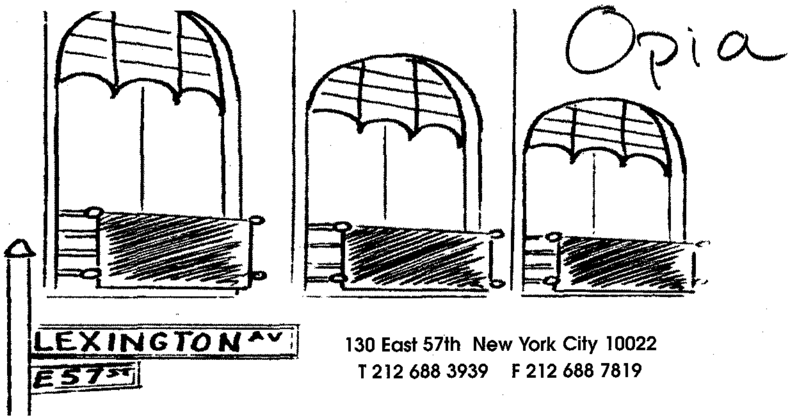

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MINIMUM STAY 30 DAYS

cue

Movies

Edited by Ben Kaplan

NEWTHISWEEK

All About the Benjamins
A no-nonsense Miami bounty hunter (Ice Cube) and his wisecracking nemesis (Mike Epps) set aside their differences—sort of—to pursue a group of murderous diamond smugglers. The solid comic chemistry between the leads could've made for a breezy action romp, but a convoluted plot and dreary villains drag it down. (1 hr. 39 mins.; R) • Opens 3/8.

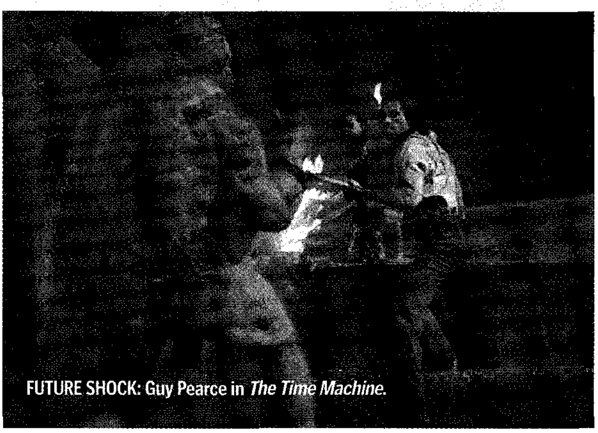
Festival in Cannes
Talkfest auteur Henry Jaglom strikes again, with this vague story shot on the fly at the 2000 Cannes film festival about an actress turned director (Greta Scacchi) and a wannabe producer (Zack Norman) trying to finance a film. Jaglom can always make idle chatter interesting, but it's decidedly not for all tastes. Co-starring Ron Silver and Anouk Aimée. (1 hr. 39 mins.; PG-13) • Opens 3/8.

The Making and Meaning of "We Are Family"
Documentary about hate crimes in New York after September 11 and the charity rerecording of "We Are Family," in which 200 celebrities in New York and L.A. sing the Sister Sledge song. (1 hr. 24 mins.; NR) • Opens 3/8.

Miss Wonton
Ah Na (Amy Ting) comes to America from her Chinese village full of hope, but the demands of work, family, and romance, along with the resurgence of some dark memories, threaten to stifle her dreams. Director Meng Ong delivers moments of real visual poetry—which almost offset the didacticism of his film. (1 hr. 27 mins.; NR) • Opens 3/8.

The Time Machine
Guy Pearce stars as the science-fiction hero created by H. G. Wells (and first brought to the screen by George Pal in 1960), whose invention transports him 800,000 years into the future. Live-action directorial debut of Simon Wells (*The Prince of Egypt*). (1 hr. 36 mins.; PG-13) • Opens 3/8.

REVIEWS BY BILGE EBIRI


FUTURE SHOCK: Guy Pearce in *The Time Machine.*

New Films

★ Amélie
Treacle this elaborately inventive deserves some kind of blue ribbon. (Rainer; 11/12/01) (2 hrs.; R) • 1; 11; 12; 15; 17; 27; 29; 64.

American Adobo
Laurice Guillen's romantic comedy follows the lives of five friends who've moved from rural Asia to downtown New York. (1 hr. 44 mins.; R) • 2.

A Beautiful Mind
Russell Crowe plays the real-life mathematician and paranoid schizophrenic John Nash in this rather conventionalized view of madness and creativity. Ron Howard directed. (Rainer; 1/7/02) (2 hrs. 9 mins.; PG-13) • 10; 12; 15; 16; 22; 28; 30; 43; 44; 50; 51; 54; 58; 59; 61; 63; 71; 72; 73; 74.

Big Bad Love
Arliss Howard directed and stars in this southern-fried bummer as a down-on-his-luck alky Mississippi writer. Not even the presence of Debra Winger as his wife can lift the picture out of the muck. (Rainer; 3/4/02) (1 hr. 51 mins.; R) • 5.

Big Fat Liar
When a Hollywood producer (Paul Giamatti) turns a student's essay into a hit film, the child (Frankie Muniz) road-trips to California to reclaim his work. Directed by Shawn Levy. (1 hr. 28 mins.; PG) • 10; 22; 29; 30; 43; 44; 45; 46; 53; 58; 59; 61; 62; 65; 70; 71; 73; 74; 76.

★ Black Hawk Down
Ridley Scott's lacerating war movie puts you right into the clamor of combat. But it's so stripped down of political context that it becomes numbing and repetitive. (Rainer; 1/1/02) (2 hrs. 23 mins.; R) • 10; 12; 16; 22; 32; 34; 43; 44; 46; 51; 58; 61; 63; 71; 74; 76.

Borstal Boy
Peter Sheridan's film stars Shawn Hatosy as the young Brendan Behan, who was incarcerated for three years in an East Anglia reform school, and it's too mild an experience to do justice to the full-throated passion of Behan's memoir. (Rainer; 3/11/02) (1 hr. 31 mins.; R) • 7; 35.

The Brotherhood of the Wolf
An exhaustingly garish French film about the Beast of Gevaudan, a wolflike creature that ravaged the countryside in the 1760s. An overlong, overloud melange. (Rainer; 1/14/02) (2 hrs. 25 mins.; R) • 10; 17.

The Cherry Orchard
Michael Cacoyannis directs this adaptation of Chekhov's play about a Russian noblewoman (Charlotte Rampling) returning to her family estate. A long, stagy slog. (2 hrs. 17 mins.; NR) • 7; 20.

Collateral Damage
Originally slated for a fall release, this Arnold Schwarzenegger film can now be seen more objectively for what it is: a stinker. (Rainer; 2/18/02) (1 hr. 55 mins.; R) • 10; 15; 16; 23; 32; 34; 40; 43; 44; 45; 46; 51; 53; 61; 63; 68; 69; 74; 75.

The Count of Monte Cristo
James Caviezel plays an escaped French prisoner who cloaks his identity to seek revenge on his betrayers. Directed by Kevin Reynolds (*Waterworld*). (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) • 10; 12; 15; 16; 19; 22; 32; 43; 60; 63.

Crossroads
Three childhood friends road-trip out west after high school. This being Britney Spears's acting debut, there are songs, messages, and midriffs aplenty. (1 hr. 34 mins.; PG-13) • 6; 15; 16; 22; 33; 40; 43; 44; 45; 46; 51; 53; 54; 57; 59; 60; 61; 63; 65; 70; 73; 74; 75; 76.

Dragonfly
Kevin Costner plays a doctor whose deceased wife sends him messages from the beyond, and the film veers drunkenly between horror and romance, as if it can't decide if its central conceit is scary or reassuring. (2 hrs. 10 mins.; PG-13) • 6; 14; 15; 16; 17; 29; 32; 43; 44; 46; 51; 53; 54; 56; 57; 59; 63; 68; 70; 72; 73; 74; 76.

Esther Kahn
Summer Phoenix, as a Jewish girl in nineteenth-century London who dreams of becoming an actress, commands the screen with a beguiling mix of delicate innocence and curious determination. A dense, fascinating film from France's Arnaud Desplechin. (2 hrs. 25 mins.; NR) • 1.

40 Days and 40 Nights
Josh Hartnett stars as a winsome stud who forgoes sex for Lent. We're meant to understand that life is about more than having sex, but the film inadvertantly shows just the opposite. As if we didn't already know. Michael Lehmann directed. (Rainer; 3/11/02) (1 hr. 32 mins.; R) • 10; 12; 15; 16; 17; 18; 27; 43; 44; 46; 51; 52; 53; 54; 58; 60; 61; 63; 65; 70; 72; 73; 74; 75; 76.

★ Gosford Park
Robert Altman's murder mystery is an artful blend of whodunit and something deeper—a meditation on class and a vanishing gentry. (Rainer; 12/24/01) (2 hrs. 17 mins.; R) • 10; 13; 15; 16; 22; 25; 43; 48; 50; 57; 64.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone
Chris Columbus's literal-minded, scrupulously faithful rendition of J. K. Rowling's beloved children's best-seller lacks transcendence. (Rainer; 11/19/01) (2 hrs. 22 mins.; PG) • 24.

Hart's War
The production values in this German POW camp melodrama are impressive but otherwise it's strictly Hollywood and Rhine. (Rainer; 2/25/02) (2 hrs. 5 mins.; R) • 10; 12; 15; 16; 22; 29; 32; 40; 46; 51; 53; 54; 57; 63; 70; 71; 72; 73; 74.

★ Hedwig and the Angry Inch
An East German rock-and-roll drag queen (John Cameron Mitchell) winds up in Junction City, Kansas, in a winning film version of the popular Off Broadway play. (1 hr. 31 mins.; R) • 8.

I Am Sam
Sean Penn plays a single father with the mental age of 7 trying to gain sole custody of his daughter in this mush-minded tearjerker. (Rainer; 12/24/01) (2 hrs. 10 mins.; PG-13) • 2; 14; 16; 17; 43; 74.

★ In the Bedroom
Todd Field, in his directorial debut, has made a fine, straightforward film about a murdered son and the parents who slowly writhe for retribution. As the parents, Tom Wilkinson and Sissy Spacek are extraordinary. (Rainer; 11/26/01) (1 hr. 46 mins.; R) • 1; 13; 15; 16; 17; 29; 36; 38; 47; 50; 59; 64; 65; 72.

Iris
Judi Dench and Jim Broadbent are Iris Murdoch and John Bayley in Richard Eyre's overly fussy movie about the famous English literary couple and Murdoch's descent into Alzheimer's. With Kate Winslet and Hugh Bonneville. (Rainer; 12/10/01) (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) • 10; 17; 18; 43; 47; 54; 71; 76.

Italian for Beginners
Lone Scherfig's film is set at a community-center class, which becomes the social nexus for six Copenhagen thirtysomething singles. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • 1; 34; 38; 48; 64.

Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius
Animated film about the world's smartest boy, who battles evil and saves the Earth but still has to face his parents and school. (1 hr. 22 mins.; G) • 24.

John Q
Denzel Washington plays a factory worker whose insurance doesn't cover a heart transplant for his boy. So he holds hostage a hospital emergency room. The film is howlingly bad. (Rainer; 2/25/02) (1 hr. 58 mins.;

Ground Rules These synopses, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer. Stars (★) denote releases that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element. **NOTE: Each review is followed by numbers indicating theaters where the film is playing; a key to theaters begins on page 94.**

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW COOPER.

PG-13) • 6; 14; 15; 16; 17; 18; 32; 37; 39; 40; 44; 45; 46; 51; 53; 54; 55; 58; 61; 63; 65; 70; 71; 72; 73; 74; 75; 76.

Kandahar
Mohsen Makhmalbaf's film is about a female journalist who must bypass the Taliban to rescue a suicidal sister in Afghanistan. In Farsi, with English subtitles. (1 hr. 25 mins.; NR) • 2.

Kung Pow: Enter the Fist
Steve Oedekerk stars as a mediocre karate master avenging his parents' death in this martial-arts spoof, which he also directed. (1 hr. 27 mins.; PG-13) • 53.

Lantana
Anthony LaPaglia plays a Sydney police detective whose search for a missing psychiatrist intersects with four unhappily married couples. With Geoffrey Rush. (2 hrs.; R) • 7; 11; 34; 38; 64; 66.

★ Last Orders
A marvelous movie about lifelong friends who carry out a buddy's last request to have his ashes scattered at sea. The cast, including Michael Caine, Helen Mirren, Ray Winstone, and Bob Hopkins, is as good as it gets. (Rainer; 2/18/02) (1 hr. 49 mins.; R) • 10; 29; 38.

★ The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of The Ring
For most of the way, Peter Jackson's film of J.R.R. Tolkien's book is powerfully imaginative. (Rainer; 12/25/01) (2 hrs. 40 mins.; PG-13) • 10; 12; 16; 22; 27; 43; 51; 61; 71; 76.

Maryam
An absorbing, timely portrait of an Iranian-American family and its assimilated teenage daughter (Mariam Parris) coping with gradual isolation in the New Jersey suburbs during the 1979 hostage crisis. (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) • 1.

Mean Machine
The football classic *The Longest Yard* gets the *Full Monty* treatment, as Vinnie Jones (*Snatch*) leads a ragged team of inmates against their brutal guards. (1 hr. 39 mins.; R) • 10; 17.

★ Monsoon Wedding
Mira Nair's giddy movie about the preparations for an arranged marriage in New Delhi is an entertaining pastiche of Bombay movie-musical nuttiness and *Father of the Bride*. The pop disposability of it all is very appealing. (Rainer; 3/4/02) (1 hr. 53 mins.; R) • 5; 26.

Monster's Ball
Billy Bob Thornton plays a Georgia death-row prison guard who winds up in a depth-charged affair with the wife (Halle Berry) of a man he helped execute. Marc Forster directed. (Rainer; 1/14/02) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) • 5; 14; 17; 31; 36; 38; 40; 46; 50; 53; 54; 64; 76.

The Mothman Prophecies
Richard Gere is a widowed newspaper reporter who becomes consumed by paranormal activity in West Virginia. Directed by Marc Pellington. (1 hr. 52 mins.; PG-13) • 17.

Mulholland Drive
Naomi Watts and Laura Elena Harring play an ingenue and an amnesiac shady lady making their way through a noirish L.A. dreamscape in David Lynch's latest weirdo fantasia. (Rainer; 10/22/01) (2 hrs. 26 mins.; R) • 3; 17.

No Man's Land
Three soldiers, two Bosnians and a Serb, are stuck between enemy lines during the Bosnian war in writer-director Danis Tanovic's debut. (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) • 11; 17.

★ Ocean's Eleven
George Clooney and Julia Roberts co-star in this heist movie set in Vegas, but Steven Soderbergh's direction is the real show here: It's an eye-in-the-sky tour de force. (Rainer; 12/10/01) (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) • 17.

Pépé Le Moko
Jean Gabin plays the titular Parisian thief, who longs for France as he hides out in Algiers. Restored print of Julien Duvivier's influential 1937 black-and-white film noir. (1 hr. 28 mins.; NR) • 4.

Piñero
Benjamin Bratt shows the rise and fall of seventies outlaw poet Miguel Piñero in Leon Ichaso's (*Sugar Hill*) film. (1 hr. 34 mins.; R) • 5.

Queen of the Damned
Stuart Townsend reawakens Anne Rice's vampire Lestat in Michael Rymer's film, also starring the late pop star Aaliyah. (1 hr. 22 mins.; R) • 10; 12; 15; 16; 22; 32; 39; 40; 41; 42; 44; 45; 46; 49; 51; 52; 53; 54; 55; 56; 58; 59; 61; 63; 65; 67; 69; 71; 73; 74; 76.

Ram Dass Fierce Grace
Ram Dass, né Richard Alpert, was one of the pivotal spiritual leaders of the sixties counterculture. This documentary is so doting, however, that one wonders if something is being left unsaid. (1 hr. 33 mins.; NR) • 4.

Return to Neverland
Disney's lackluster (and possibly blasphemous) sequel to its 1953 classic *Peter Pan*. (1 hr. 34 mins.; G) • 2; 11; 15; 17; 39; 40; 41; 42; 44; 45; 46; 49; 50; 51; 53; 54; 56; 58; 59; 60; 61; 62; 63; 65; 67; 70; 72; 73; 74; 75; 76.

Revolution OS
This documentary about the beginnings of open source (i.e., non-proprietary) software will appeal to the geek set, but may leave others scratching their heads. (1 hr. 25 mins.; NR) • 3.

Rollerball
Director John McTiernan's futuristic remake of the Norman Jewison film stars Chris Klein, LL Cool J, and Rebecca Romijn-Stamos. (1 hr. 39 mins.; PG-13) • 17; 45; 46; 53.

The Royal Tenenbaums
Wes Anderson's movie has a tip-top cast, including Gene Hackman, Anjelica Huston, Gwyneth Paltrow, Ben Stiller, and Danny Glover. It's about a family of prodigies gone to seed, but Anderson doesn't really know how to combine his askew sensibility with more heartfelt material. (Rainer; 12/10/01) (1 hr. 48 mins.; R) • 10; 16; 17; 27; 43; 66.

Scotland, PA.
A smirky reworking of *Macbeth* starring James Le Gros and Maura Tierney as Shakespeare's plotting duo. (Rainer; 2/11/02) (1 hr. 48 mins.; R) • 2.

★ Scratch
Doug Pray's engaging, informative documentary about the hip-hop D.J. scene is a fun triptych. (Rainer; 2/25/02) (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) • 5; 44.

★ The Shipping News
The film is a modestly successful adaptation of the Annie Proulx novel about a closed-off man, played (rather too reticently) by Kevin Spacey. Julianne Moore, Judi Dench, and Pete Postlethwaite co-star. (Rainer; 1/7/02) (1 hr. 58 mins.; R) • 29.

Shiri
South Korean director Kang Je-Gyu's unusual action film features a love story between a North Korean terrorist and a member of South Korea's secret police. In Korean, with English subtitles. (2 hrs. 6 mins.; R) • 17.

Snow Dogs
Cuba Gooding Jr. plays a Miami dentist who inherits an Alaskan dog-sledding team. Directed by Brian Levant. (1 hr. 36 mins.; PG) • 10; 17; 44; 46; 51; 53; 61; 63; 69; 74.

The Son's Room
Nanni Moretti directed and co-wrote and stars in this film about a psychiatrist in a small Italian town who must cope with the unexpected death of his son. (Rainer; 2/4/02) (1 hr. 39 mins.; R) • 2; 38.

Storytelling
Todd Solondz's two-part movie is an uneven attempt at extending his taboo-busting rep. In the first part, a college student (Selma Blair) is sexually brutalized by her writing professor; in the second, a documentary filmmaker makes a movie about a screwed-up high-schooler. For all of Solondz's intellectualized pretensions, he doesn't get much more from this than an exploitation filmmaker would. (Rainer; 1/21/02) (1 hr. 27 mins.; R) • 1.

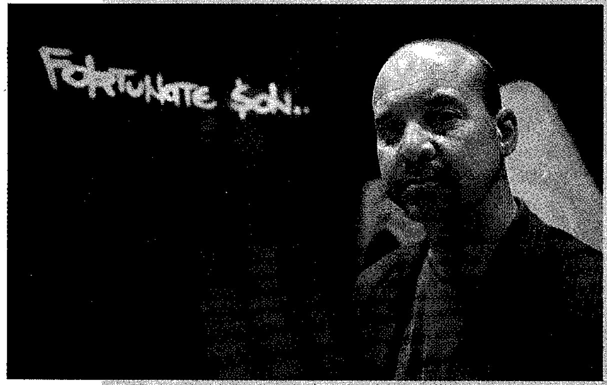
Super Troopers
The comedy team Broken Lizard plays stoner Vermont state troopers doing battle with drug smugglers while trying to save their own jobs. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • 2; 17; 51; 57; 63; 69; 71; 74.

Trouble Every Day
Vincent Gallo plays an American doctor haunted by cannibalism, and Béatrice Dalle plays a Parisian with those same needs. Claire Denis's cause célèbre is not a horror film or a comedy but a heartbreaking tale of desire and repression. (1 hr. 27 mins.; NR) • 7.

Festival

The Outsiders

Fortunate Son, the 1999 George W. Bush biography that made headlines for its stories of alleged cocaine use, was recalled by St. Martin's Press after reporters uncovered shoddy sourcing and author J. H. Hatfield's conspiracy-to-murder conviction. *Horns and Halos*, the fascinating opening picture of the **9th Underground Film Festival**, tracks Hatfield (pictured) afterward, as he teams with Sander Hicks, a Suffolk Street superintendent and punk-rocker whose attempt to republish *Fortunate Son* takes the film from the Lower East Side to Chicago's Book Expo to Hatfield's suicide late last year. "We never wanted to investigate *Fortunate Son*," says Brooklynite Suki Hawley, who co-directed with her husband, Michael Galinsky. "We wanted to make a film about people." Their funny, maddening, and ultimately shocking documentary is just one of the highlights from the Underground's 19 experimental films and 100 shorts. Other standout pictures include James Fotopoulos's *Cristabel*, the rising star's avant-garde digital-video interpretation of Coleridge's unfinished poems; *Cul de Sac: A Suburban War Story*, a documentary about the San Diego plumber who stole a battle tank from the National Guard; and *Teenage Hooker Became Killing Machine in DaeHakRoh*, a South Korean revenge fantasy about a villainous, oversexed cyborg. Begins March 6 at Anthology Film Archives. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for listings.) B.K.


FORTUNATE SON..

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF NYUFF.

Vanilla Sky
The most baroque chick flick ever made. (Rainer; 12/17/01) (2 hrs. 16 mins.; R) • 24.

★ Waking Life
Richard Linklater's film is about a young man who passes through a linked series of encounters that may or may not be dreams. One of the very best movies of the year. (Rainer; 10/29/01) (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • 3.

A Walk to Remember
Mandy Moore plays a minister's daughter who falls in love with a popular jock. (1 hr. 36 mins.; PG) • 17.

We Were Soldiers
Mel Gibson stars in this overwrought, occasionally effective, mostly cliché-ridden battle drama recounting the first major combat between the Americans and the North Vietnamese. Gibson is compelling, but the film is rather unseemly in its self-righteousness. Co-stars Chris Klein, Sam Elliott, and Barry Pepper. Written and directed by Randall Wallace, who previously wrote *Braveheart* and *Pearl Harbor* and is already an old hand at husking corn. (2 hrs. 12 mins.; R) • 6; 14; 15; 16; 21; 22; 25; 32; 37; 39; 40; 41; 42; 44; 45; 46; 49; 50; 51; 52; 53; 54; 56; 58; 59; 60; 61; 62; 63; 65; 67; 70; 72; 73; 74; 75; 76.

Wendigo
A family goes off into the mountains and finds itself at the mercy of rednecks and demons in art-horror auteur Larry Fessenden's film. (1 hr. 32 mins.; R) • 4.

What Time Is It There?
Director Tsai Ming-Liang has an artful visual and aural sense. Still, this movie, about a watch seller who becomes enamored of a Paris-bound customer, employs a wearying amount of Antonioni-esque alienation effects. (Rainer; 1/21/02) (1 hr. 56 mins.; NR) • 3.

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

1. CC Angelika Film Center
18 W. Houston St. (212-995-2000) • Amélie; Esther Kahn; In the Bedroom; Italian for Beginners; Maryam; Storytelling

2. CC Village East
189 Second Ave. (212-529-6799) • American Adobo; I Am Sam; Kandahar; Return to Neverland; Scotland, PA.; The Son's Room; Super Troopers

3. Cinema Village
22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363) • Mulholland Drive; Revolution OS; Waking Life; What Time Is It There?

4. Film Forum
209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110) • Pépé Le Moko; Ram Dass Fierce Grace; Wendigo

5. Landmark Sunshine Cinema
143 E. Houston St. (212-358-7709) • Big Bad Love; Monsoon Wedding; Monster's Ball; Piñero; Scratch

6. Loews Village
66 Third Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#952) • Crossroads; Dragonfly; John Q; Training Day; We Were Soldiers

7. Quad Cinema
34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800) • Borstal Boy; The Cherry Orchard; Lantana; Trembling Before G-d; Trouble Every Day

8. The Screening Room
54 Varick St. (212-334-2100) • Hedwig and the Angry Inch; Metropolis; Moulin Rouge

9. Two Boots Pioneer Theater
155 E. 3rd St. (212-212-254-3300) • The Business of Strangers; Donnie Darko; In the Mood for Love

10. UA Union Square
13th St. and Broadway (212-253-2225) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; The Brotherhood of the Wolf; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Gosford Park; Hart's War; Iris; Last Orders; The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring; Mean Machine; Queen of the Damned; The Royal Tenenbaums; Snow Dogs

14th–41st Streets

11. CC Murray Hill Cinemas
160 E. 34th St. (212-689-6548) • Amélie; Lantana; No Man's Land; Return to Neverland

12. Clearview's Chelsea
260 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#597) • Amélie; A Beautiful Mind; Black Hawk Down; The Count of Monte Cristo; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Hart's War; The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring; Queen of the Damned

13. Clearview's Chelsea West
333 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#614) • Gosford Park; In the Bedroom

14. Loews 19th St. East
890 Broadway, at 19th St. (212-50-LOEWS#858) • Dragonfly; I Am Sam; John Q; Monster's Ball; We Were Soldiers

15. Loews 34th St. Theatre
312 W. 34th St. (212-244-8850) • Amélie; A Beautiful Mind; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; Crossroads; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Gosford Park; Hart's War; In the Bedroom; John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

16. Loews Kips Bay Theatre
550 Second Ave., at 32nd St. (212-50-LOEWS#558) • A Beautiful Mind; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; Crossroads; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Gosford Park; Hart's War; I Am Sam; In the Bedroom; John Q; The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring; Queen of the Damned; The Royal Tenenbaums; We Were Soldiers

42nd–60th Streets

17. AMC Empire 25 Theatres
234 W. 42nd St. (212-398-3939) • Amélie; The Brotherhood of the Wolf; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; I Am Sam; In the Bedroom; Iris; John Q; Mean Machine; Monster's Ball; Monsters, Inc.; The Mothman Prophecies; Moulin Rouge; Mulholland Drive; No Man's Land; Ocean's Eleven; Return to Neverland; Rollerball; The Royal Tenenbaums; Shiri; Shrek; Snow Dogs; Super Troopers; Training Day; A Walk To Remember

18. CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3
1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (212-753-6022) • 40 Days and 40 Nights; Iris; John Q

19. CC Eastside Playhouse
919 Third Ave., nr. 55th St. (212-755-3020) • The Count of Monte Cristo

20. Clearview's 59th Street East
239 E. 59th St. (212-777-FILM#615) • The Cherry Orchard

21. Clearview's Ziegfeld
141 W. 54th St. (212-777-FILM#602) • We Were Soldiers

22. Loews 42nd Street E Walk
42nd St. at Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#572) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; The Count of Monte Cristo; Crossroads; Gosford Park; Hart's War; The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring; Queen of the Damned; We Were Soldiers

23. Loews Astor Plaza
44th St. at Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#699) • Collateral Damage

24. Loews State
1540 Broadway, nr. 45th St. (212-50-LOEWS#901) • Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius; Vanilla Sky

25. New York Twin
1271 Second Ave., nr. 66th St. (212-505-CINE#590) • Gosford Park; We Were Soldiers

26. Paris Theatre
4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800) • Monsoon Wedding

61st Street and Above, East Side

27. CC 86th St. East
210 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#763) • Amélie; 40 Days and 40 Nights; The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring; The Royal Tenenbaums

28. Clearview's Beekman
1254 Second Ave., nr. 65th St. (212-777-FILM#606) • A Beautiful Mind

29. Clearview's First & 62nd St.
400 E. 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#957) • Amélie; Big Fat Liar; Dragonfly; Hart's War; In the Bedroom; Last Orders; The Shipping News

30. Clearview's Park and 86th St.
125 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#604) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar

31. Loews 72nd St. East
1230 Third Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-50-LOEWS#704) • Monster's Ball

32. Loews Orpheum 7
1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (212-50-LOEWS#964) • Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte

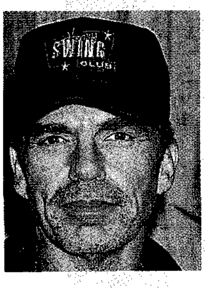
TRAILERS

OLIVER'S TWIST In a move sure to disappoint the likes of Martin Scorsese and producer Dino De Laurentiis, who are racing to get their own movies about Alexander the Great under way, **Oliver Stone** has signed on to direct **Heath Ledger** in Intermedia's *Alexander,* effectively conquering all competition. The epic will focus on the life of the Macedonian general, who conquered much of the ancient world by the age of 33, with production scheduled to kick off next October in India.

MEG GOES NOIR? Jane Campion's next film, *In the Cut,* based on the 1995 novel by Susanna Moore, starts shooting in New York this summer. **Nicole Kidman**, previously attached to star in the kinky-sex thriller, has dropped out, and the famously perky **Meg Ryan** has emerged as her unlikely replacement. Ryan takes on the role of a writing teacher who embarks on a sexually charged affair with a detective—to be played by **Mark Ruffalo**—who's investigating a strangling case in her neighborhood. Sony Screen Gems will distribute.

GONZO PAPERS, PART II Johnny Depp is back for another turn as deranged author **Hunter S. Thompson**; he'll star in an adaptation of the writer's first novel, *The Rum Diary,* with **Nick Nolte** and **Benicio Del Toro.** FilmEngine (a partnership formed by **Josh Hartnett**'s Roulette Productions and the producers of *American Pie*) just bought the rights to the book, which chronicles Thompson's early days as a reporter in San Juan. Hartnett himself is reportedly considering a role, and shooting is scheduled for next winter.

WRITER'S PLOT Billy Bob Thornton is attached to star in Artisan Entertainment's *Coincidence,* the screen adaptation of **David Ambrose**'s recent novel. The psychological thriller follows a writer (Thornton) whose obsessive study of coincidences leads him to discover many uncanny and terrifying alignments in his own life. No director has yet signed on. SARA CARDACE



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Opening

Manhattan Transfer

Singaporean writer-director Meng Ong's immigrant experience in New York is the basis for **Miss Wonton**, his debut feature. Newcomer Amy Ting (pictured) plays the hopeful, somewhat delusional transplanted girl who trolls Grand Central for white men while dreaming of the suburbs and living above a Chinatown restaurant. (Interestingly, the actress—a World Trade Center Marriott employee who had a close call on September 11—has just joined the Air Force.) "New York is a magical land where anything can happen," says Ong, 34, who lives in the West Village. "It can also tear you down quick." Opens March 8.

Cristo; Dragonfly; Hart's War; John Q; Queen of the Damned; We Were Soldiers

33. UA East
1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (212-249-5100) • Crossroads

34. UA Gemini
1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (212-832-1670) • Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; Italian for Beginners; Lantana

61st Street and Above, West Side

35. Clearview's 62nd and Broadway
1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#864) • Borstal Boy

36. Clearview's Metro Cinema
2626 Broadway, nr. 99th St. (212-777-FILM#609) • In the Bedroom; Monster's Ball

37. Clearview's Olympia
2770 Broadway, nr. 106th St. (212-777-FILM#613) • John Q; We Were Soldiers

38. Lincoln Plaza Cinemas
30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway nr. 62nd St. (212-757-2280) • In the Bedroom; Italian For Beginners; Lantana; Last Orders; Monster's Ball; The Son's Room

39. Loews 84th Street
2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (212-50-LOEWS#701) • John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

40. Magic Johnson Harlem USA
300 W. 125th St. (212-665-8733) • Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Hart's War; John Q; Monster's Ball; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

41. New Coliseum
701 W. 181st St. (212-740-1545) • Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

42. Nova
3589 Broadway, nr. 147th St. (212-862-5728) • Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

43. Sony Lincoln Square
1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (212-50-LOEWS#638) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; Crossroads; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Gosford Park; I Am Sam; Iris; The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring; The Royal Tenenbaums

Bronx

44. Bay Plaza
2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (718-777-FILM#833) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Scratch; Snow Dogs; We Were Soldiers

45. Concourse Plaza
214 E. 161th St. (718-588-8800) • Big Fat Liar; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Rollerball; We Were Soldiers

46. Whitestone
2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (718-409-9030) • Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Hart's War; John Q; Monster's Ball; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Rollerball; Snow Dogs; We Were Soldiers

Brooklyn

47. BAM Rose Cinemas
30 Lafayette Ave. (718-623-2770) • In the Bedroom; Iris

48. Brooklyn Heights Pavilion
70 Henry St. (718-369-0838) • Gosford Park; Italian for Beginners

49. Canarsie
9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (718-251-0700) • Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

50. Cobble Hill Cinema
265 Court St. (718-596-9113) • A Beautiful Mind; Gosford Park; In the Bedroom; Monster's Ball; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

51. Court Street 12
106 Court St. (718-246-7469) • A Beautiful Mind; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Hart's War; John Q; The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Snow Dogs; Super Troopers; We Were Soldiers

52. Kent Triplex
Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (718-338-3371) • 40 Days and 40 Nights; Queen of the Damned; We Were Soldiers

53. Linden Boulevard Multiplex
Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (718-277-0303) • Big Fat Liar; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Hart's War; John Q; Kung Pow: Enter the Fist; Monster's Ball; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Rollerball; Snow Dogs; We Were Soldiers

54. Pavilion
188 Prospect Park West (718-369-0838) • A Beautiful Mind; Crossroads; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Hart's War; Iris; John Q; Monster's Ball; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

55. Pavilion Flatbush
314 Flatbush Ave. (718-596-7070) • John Q; Queen of the Damned

56. Ridgewood
55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (718-821-5993) • Dragonfly; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

57. UA Marboro
6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (718-232-4000) • Crossroads; Dragonfly; Gosford Park; Hart's War; Super Troopers

58. UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay
3907 Shore Pkwy., off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (718-615-1700) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; 40 Days and 40 Nights; John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

Queens

59. Centre Sunnyside
42-17 Queens Blvd. (718-361-6869) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Crossroads; Dragonfly; In the Bedroom; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

60. Cinemart
106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (718-261-2244) • The Count of Monte Cristo; Crossroads; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

61. College Point Multiplex
28-55 Ulmer St., Whitestone (718-886-4900) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; 40 Days and 40 Nights; John Q; The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Snow Dogs; We Were Soldiers

62. Jackson Triplex
82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (718-478-6777) • Big Fat Liar; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

63. Kaufman Astoria Cinema
38th St. at 35th Ave. (718-786-2020) • A Beautiful Mind; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; The Count of Monte Cristo; Crossroads; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Hart's War; John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Snow Dogs; Super Troopers; We Were Soldiers

64. Kew Gardens Cinemas
81-05 Lefferts Blvd. (718-441-9835) • Amélie; Gosford Park; In the Bedroom; Italian for Beginners; Lantana; Monster's Ball

65. Main Street Cinemas
72-66 Main St. (718-263-4828) • Big Fat Liar; Crossroads; 40 Days and 40 Nights; In the Bedroom; John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

66. North Shore Towers
27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (718-229-7702) • Lantana; The Royal Tenenbaums

67. Plaza
103-14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (718-639-0012) • Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

68. UA Brandon Cinema
70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (718-544-1020) • Collateral Damage; Dragonfly

69. UA Crossbay
94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (718-848-1738) • Collateral Damage; Queen of the Damned; Snow Dogs; Super Troopers

70. UA Crossbay II
92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (718-641-5330) • Big Fat Liar; Crossroads; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Hart's War; John Q; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

71. UA Midway
108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (718-544-5545) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Hart's War; Iris; John Q; The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring; Queen of the Damned; Super Troopers

72. UA Movieworld
242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (718-423-7200) • A Beautiful Mind; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Hart's War; In the Bedroom; John Q; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

Staten Island

73. Atrium
680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (718-317-8300) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Crossroads; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Hart's War; John

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF DREAMCHAMBER FILMS.

Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

74. Staten Island Stadium 16
2474 Forest Ave. (718-273-4200) • A Beautiful Mind; Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Collateral Damage; Crossroads; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Hart's War; I Am Sam; John Q; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; Snow Dogs; Super Troopers; We Were Soldiers

75. UA Hylan Plaza
107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (718-351-0805) • Collateral Damage; Crossroads; 40 Days and 40 Nights; John Q; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

76. UA Movies at Staten Island
141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (718-983-9600) • Big Fat Liar; Black Hawk Down; Crossroads; Dragonfly; 40 Days and 40 Nights; Iris; John Q; The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring; Monster's Ball; Queen of the Damned; Return to Neverland; We Were Soldiers

Museums, Societies, Etc.

77. African American Women in Cinema
(DGA Theater) 110 W. 57th St. (718-784-4520); $12. • 3/8: *Sisters in Cinema* (2001); *The Rosa Parks Story* (2002). 3/9: *Lucky* (2001); *All Water Has a Perfect Memory* (2001); *Cousins* (2001); *Kali's Vibe* (2002). 3/10: *Fantacoca* (2001); *Laafi Bala* (2001); *Daughters of War* (2001).

78. American Museum of the Moving Image
36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077); $8.50. • "New York, New York: Films Selected by the New York Film Critics Circle." 3/9: *Nothing Sacred* (1937); *The Clock* (1945). 3/10: *King Kong* (1933); *The Cruise* (1998).

79. Anthology Film Archives
32 Second Ave. (212-505-5110); $8. • "The 9th Underground Film Festival." 3/6: *Horns and Halos* (2002). 3/7: *Prohibited Beats* (2002); *Our Nation* (2002); *Satan's Sadists* (1969); *On a Shore Beneath the Sky* (2001). 3/8: *Christabel* (2002); *Cul de Sac: A Suburban War Story* (2001); *Dildo Heaven* (2002); *Angel's Wild Women* (2001); *In Our Garden* (2001). 3/9: *Blind: Video Days* (1991); *The Slow Business of Going* (2001); *Investigation of a Flame* (2001); *Lord of the Cockrings* (2001); *Breath Control* (2002). 3/10: *Beautiful Frenzy* (2001); *Teenage Hooker Became Killing Machine in DaeHakRoh* (2001); *Nitwit* (2001).

80. Columbia University
Miller Theater, Broadway and 116th St. (212-854-4482); $8. • 3/11: *Place Vendôme* (1998).

81. Film Society of Lincoln Center
65 W. 65th St., plaza level (212-875-5600); $9. • "Rendez-vous With French Cinema." 3/8–3/9: *Read My Lips* (2001); *God Is Great, I'm Not* (2001)); *Wimbledon Stage* (2001). 3/9: *Read My Lips* (2001); *God Is Great, I'm Not* (2001)); *Wimbledon Stage* (2001); *Cet Amour-là* (2001); *The Pornographer* (2001). 3/10: *Cet Amour-là* (2001). 3/12: *The Pornographer* (2001); *Inch'Allah Dimanche* (2001).

82. Goethe-Institut New York
1014 Fifth Ave.; free. • "Women in German Film." 3/7: *Madame Dubarry* (1919). 3/12: *The Oyster Princess* (1919); *Backstairs* (1921). 3/22: *Destiny* (1921). 3/28: *Shattered* (1921); *Castle Vogeloed* (1921).

83. New York Children's Film Festival
(Cantor Film Center) 36 E. 8th St. (212-349-0330); $6. • 3/9: *The Natural History of the Chicken* (2001); *My Fish Brian* (1999); *Rex the Runt* (2001); *The Whale Hunt* (2001); *Karo's Big Day Out* (2001); *Panda Go Panda* (1972); *What I Saw From My Window* (2002); *9/11: Looking Back . . . Moving Forward* (2002); *The Hedge of Thorns* (2001). 3/10: *The Making of Shrek* (2001).

84. Ocularis
70 N. 6th St., Brooklyn (718-388-8713); $5. • "Love in a Cold Season." 3/10: *Matador* (1986); *Careful* (1992).

85. Women and the Holocaust
70 Washington Sq. So. (212-945-0039); $5. • 3/9: *Last Journey Into Silence* (2001); *One Survivor Remembers* (1995). 3/10: *My Mother's Courage* (1995); *The Last Stage* (1948). Cantor Film Center, 36 E. 8th St.: 3/16: *Does Memory Dissolve in Water?* (1996). 3/17: *Dita Saxova* (1968); *High Street* (1976). 3/23: *Bach in Auschwitz* (1995). 3/24: *Angry Harvest* (1985); *Voyages* (1999).

Remembrance

Never Forget

The ten films screening at **Women and the Holocaust** are set in wildly different locations, from an orphanage in Prague to the Evian health spa in France. Mostly documentaries (some produced just after the end of World War II), the pictures include *Last Journey Into Silence*, Shsoh Shlam's opening-night film about Shaar Menashe, Israel's only mental institution for survivors; and *My Mother's Courage*, German director Michael Verhoeven's satire about a Budapest woman (Pauline Collins, pictured) whose trip to the market ends in handcuffs and exile. From the Museum of Jewish Heritage at the Bobst Library and Cantor Film Center, opening March 9. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

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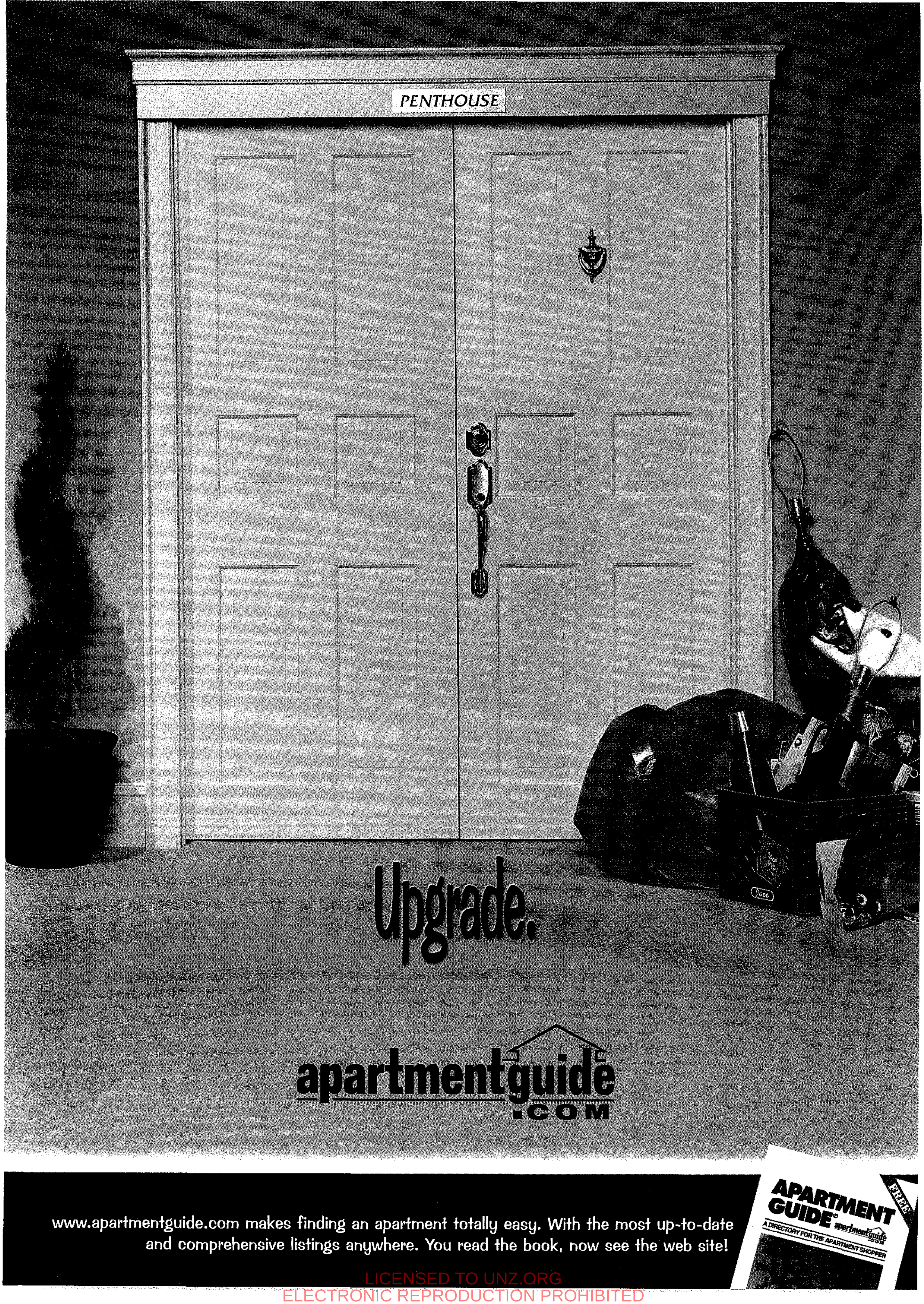
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cue **TELEVISION** **JOHN LEONARD**

Missing Persons

NBC and HBO bring the brutal murder of Matthew Shepard to the small screen, and while heartfelt, both overlook telling aspects of small-town life in Little America.

TAKING FLIGHT: Christina Ricci leads the mourners for a murdered gay man in HBO's *The Laramie Project.*

YOU'LL BE ANGUISHED BY THE angels and confounded by the shoes. The same angels show up in both these variations on a hate crime. They are friends and classmates of Matthew Shepard, constituents of grief, supporters of gay rights. Outside the church or the courthouse, dressed up in sheets with scaffolding for wings, they interpose themselves between the cameras of the media and the agitators chanting homophobic slogans. They complicate the "live" vampire feed. **The Matthew Shepard Story** tells us that these angels wore earplugs so as not to have to hear the slogans. Toward the end of **The Laramie Project**, they will also resonate, of course, with a production of Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* at the University of Wyoming.

Whereas the shoes remain a mystery. In *The Laramie Project*—originally a stage piece based on 200 interviews conducted by Moises Kaufman and his Tectonic Theater colleagues, with a small cast playing multiple roles, before it was opened up to blue sky, brown prairie, and big-name acting—the two men who abducted, tortured, and murdered Shepard are asked point-blank by the detective (Clancy Brown): "Why did you take his shoes?" They don't know, or choose not to explain. In *The Matthew Shepard Story*, a flashback follows the boy on a school holiday from Switzerland to Morocco, where, as if in undress rehearsal, he will be ambushed and assaulted by young thugs who also take his shoes. This coincidence is not remarked upon by either film, since they haven't seen each other. But those of us who have seen both are none the wiser.

In fact, there's surprisingly little overlap. When Matthew's father, Dennis Shepard, rises in court to urge mercy instead of death for Aaron McKinney, he says the same thing whether he's Sam Waterston on NBC or Terry Kinney on HBO. But *The Laramie Project* is otherwise an anthropology of a small town (population 26,000) and a cowboy culture ("Live and let live" is how they like to think of themselves), with soul-searching locals impersonated by the likes of Dylan Baker, Steve Buscemi, Kathleen Chalfant, Peter Fonda, Janeane Garofalo, Joshua Jackson, Laura Linney, Camryn Manheim, Christina Ricci, Lois Smith, and Frances Sternhagen. Whereas *The Matthew Shepard Story*, as we'd expect of a commercial network movie, is the usual nuclear-family fallout shelter, all about what it felt like to be Matthew (Shane Meier) as well as his parents (Waterston and a very bruised Stockard Channing), and almost entirely innocent of politics, community, or ideology.

The Laramie Project
Saturday, March 9;
8 to 9:45 P.M.; HBO.

The Matthew Shepard Story
Saturday, March 16;
9 to 11 P.M.; NBC.

So, perhaps oddly, Matthew is mostly missing from *The Laramie Project*, which is more about how people have to reimagine themselves to accommodate what happened to him—while Laramie is mostly missing from *The Matthew Shepard Story*, which seeks rather to account for the agonizing family decision not to ask for capital punishment. From *The Matthew Shepard Story*, you wouldn't know about any of the remarkable people we meet in *The Laramie Project*, like Father Roger Schmit (Tom Bower), the Catholic priest; Rebecca Hilliker (Camryn Manheim), who runs the University of Wyoming theater program; or Reggie Fluty (Amy Madigan), the police officer who treated Matt's bloody wounds, only to discover that he was HIV-positive. From *The Laramie Project*, you wouldn't know how spectacularly unhappy Matthew had been before his fatal abduction, even in Denver, or that his father was in Saudi Arabia during most of the trial. And from neither film do we learn anything at all about Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson, the born losers who left him hanging on a fence; for this intelligence, you must consult JoAnn Wypijewski's extraordinary essay in *Harper's* three years ago.

Well, in Laramie, as one closeted gay rancher explains, they didn't exactly live and let live. It is more like "If I don't tell you I'm a fag, you won't beat the crap out of me." But how is this much different from anyplace else in our homophobic country

PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC LIEBOWITZ.

and our homophobic world? In Laramie, at least they seem to take what happened personally.

- **Who Is Alan Smithee?** (MARCH 5; 10 TO 11 P.M.; AMC) is an amusing look behind the name they used to stick up on the screen when the actual director of the movie didn't want to be associated with what we were about to see, with long looks at continuing controversies from *Death of a Gunfighter* (1969) to *American History X* (1998).

- **Joe and Max** (March 9; 8 to 10 P.M.; Starz!) takes us behind the scenes of the heavyweight-championship bouts between Joe Louis (Leonard Roberts) and Max Schmeling (Til Schweiger) to find a friendship utterly removed from the propagandistic hype of "Brown Bomber" vs. "Nazi." Don't miss the former Femme Nikita, Peta Wilson, as Max's blonde actress bride.

- **Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister** (March 10; 7 to 9 P.M.; ABC) is more fun than we're accustomed to in this Disney slot, reworking Cinderella to create a sort of *Portrait of the Artist as an Ugly Duckling*, with Stockard Channing, Jonathan Pryce, Azura Skye, and Trudie Styler, from a book by Gregory Maguire.

- **Firestarter: Rekindled** (March 10 and 11; 9 to 11 P.M.; Sci Fi) returns to the scene of Stephen King's original crime, picking up the pyrokinetic Charlene "Charlie" McGee (Marguerite Moreau) ten years after she thinks she's fried all her evil government-agency pursuers—except Malcolm McDowell is on her trail, using Danny Nucci to do his legwork, while Dennis Hopper is also hanging around to explain the future, and then there is that secret laboratory full of creepy paranormal children who come out at night to rob banks. Worth it just to look at Moreau.

- **Desert Saints** (March 10; 10 to 11:30 P.M.; Cinemax), with hit man Kiefer Sutherland, undercover femme fatale Melora Walters, government agents Jamey Sheridan and Leslie Stefanson, and the wonderfully insouciant diner waitress Rachel Ticotin, wants to be forties noir and gets lost somewhere between triple crosses. Too bad, because Walters pulls out all the stops. ■

John Leonard's reviews can be read at nymetro.com/archive/leonard.

IN BRIEF

Classical Music |

Peter G. Davis

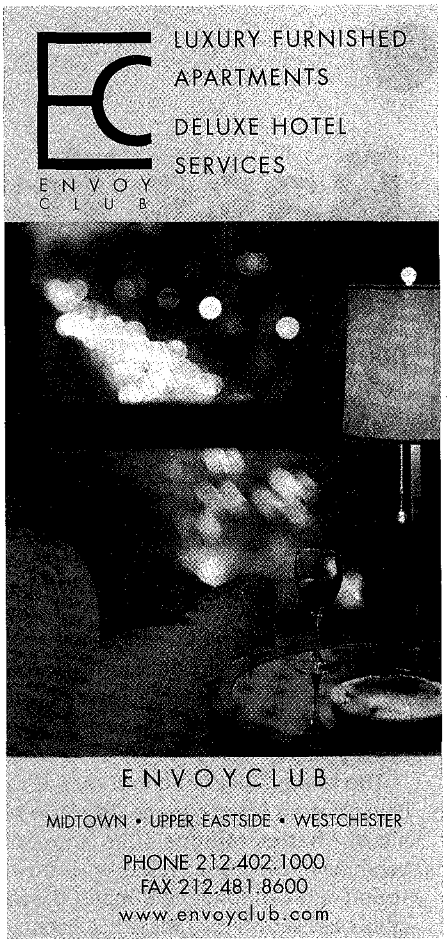
The Munich Philharmonic

Three concerts conducted by James Levine at Carnegie Hall.

WHY JAMES LEVINE EVER CHOSE TO COMMIT so much time and energy to the comparatively low-profile **Munich Philharmonic** has never made much sense, and the orchestra's recent Carnegie Hall concerts did little to dispel the mystery. Officially designated Munich's "chief conductor" in 1999 (a strangely self-effacing job description for the title-conscious maestro), Levine will relinquish the post in 2004 when he assumes a far more prestigious appointment, music director of the Boston Symphony. After that, his Munich interim will surely seem like a blip on this chronic overachiever's CV, especially since there will apparently be no commercial recordings to document the relationship.

Still, for New Yorkers at least, it was interesting to hear Levine lead an orchestra other than his Met band. The three generous programs were dominated by German staples (symphonies by Mahler, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Brahms), with a flavoring of Americana: Ives's *Three Places in New England* and John Harbison's Symphony No. 3. If the Philharmonic didn't toss off these scores with the same virtuosity that the Met musicians summon up so readily, the two orchestras do have much in common, notably an aggressive instrumental attack along with a neon-lit brilliance that glares as often as it dazzles.

The musical approach was also similar: broad phrases, lingering tempos, and much savoring of the moment, frequently at the expense of the whole. The Mahler Fourth suffered most in that respect, a self-regarding interpretation that eventually lost sight of reality entirely and seemed to last forever. The other symphonies received more reasonable treatment and were certainly played with distinction, but even here the musical gestures sounded curiously manufactured and without any real musical impulse—a clear case of nice suit, nobody in it. Only in the two American works did I get a sense of engagement and spontaneity—in particular the Harbison symphony, a one-movement work of considerable emotional range and substance. ■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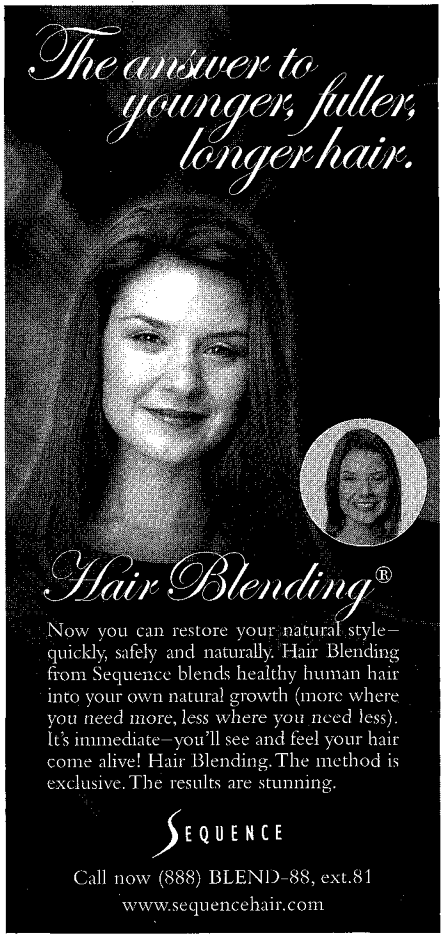

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Bass Instincts

Two exuberant concerts—one part of a weekly series at Time Café, the other an 80th-birthday homage—affirm the late bassist and composer Charles Mingus's place in the jazz pantheon.

'I AM A GOOD COMPOSER with great possibilities," Charles Mingus wrote during a stay at Bellevue, but "jazz has too many strangling qualities for a composer." Though Mingus doubted that jazz itself could ever become institutionalized, 21 years after his death, jazz institutions are thriving.

The Mingus Big Band and Jazz at Lincoln Center's **Scenes in the City: The Music of Charles Mingus** offer competing versions of his vision. Thanks to the devotion of his widow, Sue Mingus, the irascible bassist and composer has been getting his due on a weekly basis at Time Café, where devotees flock to hear a raucous, loose-knit ensemble. This year would have been Mingus's 80th birthday, prompting Jazz at Lincoln Center to give an overdue institutional nod to a composer nearly edited out of Ken Burns's *Jazz*. Mingus refuses to be edited out of New York's cultural life, though, and these performances remind us why.

In 1966, Mingus was evicted from a loft on Great Jones Street, where he was trying to start a jazz-education program. The fourteen-piece band at Time Café, located right around the corner, reclaims Mingus near the scene of his dispossession. Each of the tunes performed last week demonstrated how Mingus could take a number of styles—the blues, Latin, gospel, even variations on sonata form—and put his inimitable stamp on them, with infectious melodies and an aesthetic of excess that challenged each form it took. Who but the mischievous trombonist Frank Lacy could show us that the classic, frenetic "Boogie Stop Shuffle" had the same melody as the theme song to *Spider Man*? A righteously indignant "Fables of Faubus" and a comically apocalyptic "Don't Let Them Drop That Atomic Bomb on Me" demonstrated a level of high artistry that still could go for the jugular. The group is irreverent, loud, and even parodic, yet it sacrifices none of Mingus's dexterity, complexity, or scope. The Big Band likes to close its shows with an exuberant version of "Better Get Hit in Your Soul"—after all, a Mingus tribute should never get *too* tidy.

Mingus Big Band
At Time Café.

Scenes in the City: The Music of Charles Mingus
Jazz at Lincoln Center at Alice Tully Hall.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY: The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra pays tribute to bassist and composer Charles Mingus.

Mingus is served up raw at the Time Café; would Jazz at Lincoln Center offer the overcooked version? Not to worry: Mingus's music brought out the best in Wynton Marsalis's fifteen-piece orchestra. Anyone in the habit of hearing the loose small-group interaction on the original recordings of "Orange Was a Color of Her Dress" or "Better Get Hit . . . " might have been initially put off by slower tempos, or tighter, more mapped-out arrangements. But Marsalis was less interested in the visceral thrill of noise (although he summoned quite a virtuosic wail or two in his trumpet solos) than in exploring the tone palettes with meticulous precision. By the time the band got through a dexterous "Black Saint and the Sinner Lady," and the closing "Don't Be Afraid, the Clown's Afraid, Too," it had loosened up enough to turn Alice Tully Hall into a big top, merging the carnivalesque with the classic.

And so we can have our pick of Minguses—the rowdy or the reverential. Mingus is a large enough figure to call for both a spontaneous repertory band and a tightly arranged orchestra. He once lamented that he never heard his music performed the way he envisioned it in his head, and no group could fully re-create Mingus's idiosyncratic rhythms, moods, humor, even his neuroses. In a conservative time when so many jazz musicians feel enslaved by tradition, Mingus still sheds light on the liberating possibilities of the jazz tradition. *Let My Children Hear Music*, said the title of a Mingus record. These competing visions of Mingus show that his wish will be fulfilled for many years to come. ■

David Yaffe's reviews can be read at nymetro.com/archive/jazz.

PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANK STEWART.

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Theater

Edited by Logan Hill

Broadway

Previews and Openings

The Crucible
Liam Neeson and Laura Linney star in Arthur Miller's allegorical tale of the Salem witch trials. $40–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. In previews for a 3/5 opening. • Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (212-239-6200)

Fortune's Fool
Alan Bates and Frank Langella star in Mike Poulton's new adaptation of the Turgenev comedy about a gentleman who, goaded by his ribald neighbor, shocks his community with an unexpected announcement. Film and stage veteran Arthur Penn (*Bonnie and Clyde*) directs. $55–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 3/8 for a 4/2 opening. • Music Box Theater, 239 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

The Goat or Who Is Sylvia?
Edward Albee's highly anticipated new play follows a successful architect (Bill Pullman) who, at the pinnacle of his career, must confess to his wife (Mercedes Ruehl) and son some awful secret. $65–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/10 opening. • Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Oklahoma!
Super-choreographer Susan Stroman (*The Producers, The Music Man*) and director Trevor Nunn (*Les Miz*) bring their acclaimed revival of the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic Stateside. An award-winning smash in London with many of the best-known show tunes ever, the production stars Patrick Wilson as Curly and Olivier winner Josefina Gabrielle as Laurey. Talented stage vets Andrea Martin and Shuler Hensley round out the cast. $20–$90. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 3/21 opening. • Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (212-307-4100).

One Mo' Time
A New Orleans jazz romp, written and directed by Vernel Bagneris, is set in the Lyric Theatre in 1926, where Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey belt out the blues and dancers cakewalk, Charleston, and swing. $30–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/6 opening. • Longacre Theatre, 220 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).

Sweet Smell of Success
John Lithgow stars as J. J. Hunsecker, the powerful gossip columnist, in this new musical adaptation based on the Ernest Lehman novella and the brutal Lehman–Clifford Odets screenplay. Directed by Nicholas Hytner and choreographed by Christopher Wheeldon, this dark musical is brought to the stage by a strong team of Broadway vets. Music by Marvin Hamlisch; lyrics by Craig Carnelia; book by John Guare. $26–$96. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 3/14 opening. • Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Now Playing

Aida
Disney's epic musical about the love affair between a Nubian slave and a cute Egyptian prince, with music by Elton John and lyrics by Tim Rice. More important, the eye-popping sets and chichi costumes are designed by Bob Crowley. $25–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Palace Theatre, 1554 Broadway, at 47th St. (212-307-4747).

An Almost Holy Picture
Kevin Bacon, a fine stage actor long before *Footloose*, plays Samuel Gentle, a groundskeeper for the Church of the Holy Comforter who struggles to divine some religious truth, in Heather McDonald's drama. $40–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. • American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. (212-719-1300).

Bea Arthur on Broadway: Just Between Friends
The wry grande dame Bea Arthur, who played Vera Charles in *Mame* and originated the role of the matchmaker Yente in *Fiddler on the Roof*, returns. She sings songs, tells dirty jokes, and reflects on decades in the business. $50–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 3/10. • Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Beauty and the Beast
The family-friendly musical adaptation of Disney's film is no *Lion King*, but it's still entertaining kids by the busload. $25–$85. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. • Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (212-307-4747).

★ Cabaret
This gritty revival of the Kander and Ebb musical won four Tonys in 1998 for its portrayal of the decadent world of Weimar-era Berlin cabaret. Based on Christopher Isherwood's *Berlin Stories*, the production has a much darker edge than the Bob Fosse film. Now starring Molly Ringwald and Raúl Esparza. $25–$95. Mon., Tues., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 3/19/98. • Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).

★ Chicago
This delightfully raunchy musical tribute to tough women and the men they murder won six Tonys in 1996. In this stylish production, choreographed by Ann Reinking and directed by Walter Bobbie, female inmates in a Jazz Age Chicago prison vie for the attention of a flashy lawyer and the tabloid press. $20–$90. Mon., Tues., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 11/14/96. • Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

★ Contact
This sensational, Tony-blessed dance-theater work by John Weidman and Broadway's reigning director-choreographer, Susan Stroman, presents a triptych of inventive pieces, ranging from a naughty flirtation to a suicidal adman's frantic fantasy. Charlotte d'Amboise, Colleen Dunn, and Alan Campbell now star. $90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

★ Elaine Stritch at Liberty
Elaine Stritch takes her smash-hit thunderstorm of a solo show to Broadway. Directed by George Wolfe, this show is a funny and ferocious summation of a life lived furiously and an exemplary lesson in the oft-abused retrospective format. $40–$85. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 5. Through 5/26. • Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. (212-307-4100).

★ 42nd Street
Come and meet those dancin' feet. This revival of the Al Dubin and Harry Warren musical about the proverbial chorus girl who gets her big break is snappily directed by Mark Bramble, with exuberant choreography by Randy Skinner, and features a top-notch cast. $25–$95. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4100).

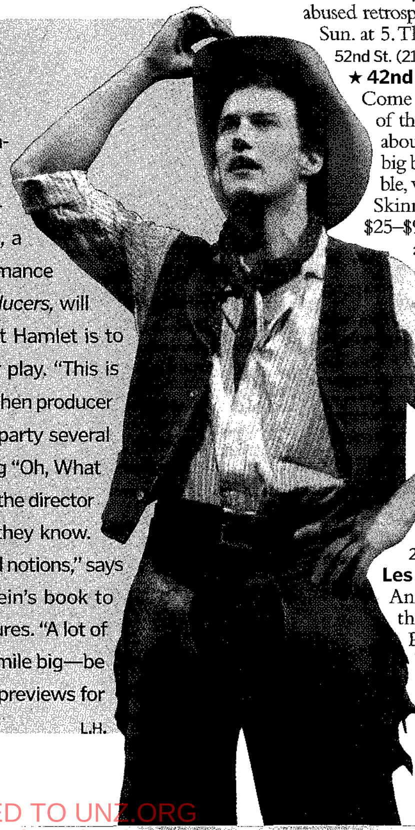
★ The Full Monty
A rambunctious yet heartfelt musical adaptation of the 1997 film about desperate, destitute men who have nothing to lose but their underwear. Music and lyrics by David Yazbek; book by Terrence McNally; directed by Jack O'Brien. $31–$86. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).

Les Misérables
An audacious button-pusher with over-the-top songs like "Do You Hear the People Sing?" and "I Dreamed a Dream," producer Cameron Mackintosh's mega-hit, based on the Victor Hugo novel, still stands as the best of the big British commercial im-

Opening

Okie Dokey

Three years ago, Trevor Nunn's production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's **Oklahoma!** dazzled London, roped in a passel of Olivier Awards, and launched its relatively unknown lead—Hugh Jackman—into the *X-Men* academy. Now Patrick Wilson (pictured), a big-voiced actor who would've won a Tony last year for his performance in *The Full Monty* if it hadn't been for a little thing called *The Producers*, will play Curly, the amiable cowboy who is to musical theater what Hamlet is to Shakespearean drama: a character an accomplished actor *must* play. "This is one of a very few roles that I really dreamed about," says Wilson. When producer Cameron Mackintosh first approached him about the role—at a party several years ago—Wilson had no hesitation. Two years later, after singing "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin' " at an audition for Nunn, Wilson recalls, he and the director discussed the complexity of a musical that many already think they know. "Trevor said he didn't want me to go into this with any preconceived notions," says Wilson, who adds that Nunn has compared Oscar Hammerstein's book to Chekhov and hasn't been afraid to explore the show's darker textures. "A lot of people, when they direct this, just want you to go out there and smile big—be a cowboy and sing songs," he says. "That's just not what I do." In previews for a March 21 opening at the Gershwin Theatre. (See "Broadway.") L.H.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOAN MARCUS.

Opening

Still Crazy After All These Years

Two of this city's most famous eccentrics will be revived in Richard Greenberg's new drama, **The Dazzle.** Sons of a wealthy Manhattan gynecologist, Homer and Langley Collyer became tabloid legends in 1947 when their corpses were found in their Fifth Avenue and 128th Street mansion surrounded by 136 tons of junk and an assortment of lethal booby traps, one of which had killed Langley. The story that ultimately unraveled—Langley had been caring for his paralyzed and blind brother and collecting thousands of newspapers so Homer could "catch up" when he regained his sight—never came close to explaining their predicament. So Peter Frechette (pictured) and Reg Rogers, who play the brothers, will face the difficult challenge of making their performances as moving and ultimately perplexing as the story itself, when the production opens March 5 at the Roundabout's Gramercy Theatre. (See "Off Broadway.")

ports. $20–$90. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

★ The Lion King
Based on the popular Disney movie, this sublimely inventive production showcases some of the best experimental theater techniques of a generation, wrought with joyful mastery by experimental director extraordinaire Julie Taymor, and rewarded with a bouquet of Tonys in 1998. $30–$95. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 11/13/97. • New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4747).

★ Mamma Mia!
This season's feel-good hit is an unabashedly silly musical about a young bride-to-be and her single mom, scored with 22 shimmery disco tunes by Abba's Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus. Louise Pitre, Judy Kaye, Tina Maddigan, and Karen Mason star. Call for schedule. $55–$98.75. • Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (212-563-5544).

★ Metamorphoses
A very welcome Broadway transfer, writer-director Mary Zimmerman's striking meditation on mutability was one of the fall's most surprising successes. Restlessly inventive but utterly visceral, Zimmerman and her company put a 27-foot-long pool of water to perfect use, stressing the elemental nature of Ovid's classic tales of Midas, Narcissus, and more. Myths are rendered with dramatic flair, unpretentious humor, and a heartbreaking final tableau; this transformative mix should transmute into a sharp Broadway success. $30–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Circle in the Square Theatre, 1633 Broadway (212-239-6200).

★ Noises Off
Patti Lupone, Peter Gallagher, Richard Easton, and Faith Prince star in this lively revival of Michael Frayn's London hit, a slapstick farce about a touring theatrical troupe. $40–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (212-307-4100).

The Phantom of the Opera
Andrew Lloyd Webber's campy version of the macabre tale, given an opulent spin by director Hal Prince. $20–$90. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. • Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

★ The Producers
Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick produce the ultimate "surefire flop," *Springtime for Hitler*, in Mel Brooks's triumphant musical and Tony Award record-setter. Based on his Oscar-winning 1968 film, directed and choreographed with aplomb by Susan Stroman, this giddy romp is the hottest ticket in town. $30–$100. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7:30. • St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

★ Proof
Jennifer Jason Leigh plays a chronically depressed young woman whose father, a famous mathematician, recently lost his mind and then his life. When Catherine's type-A sister rolls into town for the funeral, a graduate student (the exceptional Josh Hamilton) finds a groundbreaking proof among her father's otherwise nonsensical papers and Catherine is jolted out of her near-catatonic state and into the confusing world around her. Justly rewarded with a Pulitzer and several Tonys, David Auburn's *Proof* is a virtuoso piece of writing. Daniel Sullivan's direction is impeccable. $24–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).

"QED"
Alan Alda returns in Peter Parnell's longish two-character drama about the quirky physicist Richard Feynman. Sun. and Mon. at 7:30. Through 5/13. • Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

Rent
The late Jonathan Larson's hauntingly scored, Pulitzer-winning reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as lived by a gaggle of East Village hipsters at the peak of grunge and the AIDS epidemic. $35–$80. Mon., Tues., Thurs. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 4/29/96. • Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (212-307-4100).

The Tale of the Allergist's Wife
In this shticky Manhattan comedy by Charles Busch, Tony Roberts and Valerie Harper play a hyper allergist and his frazzled self-improving wife, whose worlds are upended by the arrival of a globetrotting debutante. $30–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).

Urinetown
A downtown hit, this weird musical, with book and lyrics by Greg Kotis and music and lyrics by Mark Hollman, is now a Broadway smash. The plot? In a corrupt city beset by a disaster of apocalyptic proportions, water is worth its weight in gold, and pedestrians are forced to comply with a pay-per-pee system. $75–$85. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Henry Miller, 124 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

The Carpetbagger's Children
In Horton Foote's new family drama, Hallie Foote, Roberta Maxwell, and Jean Stapleton play three wealthy daughters who grew up on the Texas estate of their father, a former Union soldier. $60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 3/7 for a 3/25 opening. • Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

Cymbeline
Shakespeare's Globe Theater stages a minimalist production of the complicated drama, with just six actors taking on 30 roles. $25–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 3/17. • BAM Harvey Theater, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn (718-636-4100).

The Dazzle
Richard Greenberg's new drama takes on the complicated story of the eccentric Collyer brothers. Reg Rogers, Peter Frechette, and Francie Swift star. David Warren directs. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. In previews for a 3/5 opening. • Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. (212-777-4900).

Franny's Way
This new drama written and directed by Richard Nelson (*James Joyce's The Dead, Madame Melville*) introduces two young women from upstate who, joined by their grandmother, find unexpected drama in the city. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Previews begin 3/6 for a 3/26 opening. Through 4/14. • Atlantic Theater, 336 W. 20th St. (212-279-4200).

The Godfadda Workout
Seth Isler parodies the Coppola films. $20–$50. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. In previews for a 3/17 opening. • American Place Theater, 111 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Helen
Tony Kushner directs a new comic drama by Ellen McLaughlin (*Tongue of a Bird*), in which Helen of Troy is zapped into a modern-day Egyptian hotel room, where she paints her nails and awaits news reports of the war she left behind. Johanna Day, Donna Murphy, Denis O'Hare, Phylicia Rashad, and Louise Wilson star. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. In previews for a 3/17 opening. • The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Menopause the Musical
A silly parody set in Bloomingdale's. $48.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/4 opening. • Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. (212-239-6200).

Miss Evers' Boys
Melting Pot Theatre (*Cobb*) stages David Feldshuh's fictionalized drama about the awful Tuskegee syphilis experiments, which infected many unwitting black American men with the disease. $45. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat., Sun. at 7, Sun. at 2. Previews begin 3/6 for a 3/13 opening. Through 4/14. • McGinn/Cazale Theater, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-279-4200).

Mr. Goldwyn
In a bit of inspired casting, comedic actor Alan King plays the contentious Hollywood producer Samuel Goldwyn in this new drama by Marsha Lebby and John Lollos. Neil Simon specialist Gene Saks (*Brighton Beach Memoirs, Biloxi Blues*) directs. $65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/13

Ground Rules Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Stars (★) indicate our editors' recommendations. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and in temporary quarters at Bowling Green Park Plaza; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOAN MARCUS.

opening. • Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-239-6200).

Prodigal
This new Australian musical, with book and lyrics by Dean Bryant and music by Matthew Frank, follows a teenager from his rural town to the big city. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., Sun. at 2:30. In previews for a 3/7 opening. • York Theatre at St. Peter's in the Citigroup Center, 619 Lexington Ave. (212-239-6200).

Surviving Grace
Illeana Douglas (*Ghost World*) and Doris Belack star in Trish Vradenburg's new play about a mother and daughter's fitful reconciliation. $30–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. In previews for a 3/12 opening. • Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (212-307-7171).

Previews

You Can't Take It With You

Immortalized as land-stealing, butt-grabbing, slave-freeing greedy lechers in *Gone With the Wind*, carpetbaggers have long loomed as bogeymen in the southern imagination—and for good reason. (Have you seen the Carolina retirement condos built by Long Island émigrés?) But the 85-year-old Texan Horton Foote (*The Young Man From Atlanta, The Last of the Thorntons*) is delivering a subtler take on these Yankee marauders in **The Carpetbagger's Children**, a family drama that received raves in Hartford last fall. As in the Hartford production, Roberta Maxwell, Jean Stapleton, and Foote's daughter Hallie (pictured, far right, with Stapleton and Maxwell) play three women who fight over the legacy, the mystery, and the 20,000 Texas acres of their late father, a former Union soldier. Previews begin March 7 at Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater. (See "Off Broadway.")

PHOTOGRAPH BY T. CHARLES ERICKSON.

Now Playing

Bewilderness
British comedian Bill Bailey's successful solo show is to be the final performance at the beloved 25-year-old Westbeth. $25–$35. Tues.–Sat. at 8. Through 3/30. • Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (212-307-4100).

Blue Man Group: Tubes
Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. $55–$65. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. at 4, 7, and 10, Sun. at 2, 5, and 8. • Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (212-254-4370).

Circumference of a Squirrel
John Walch's new one-man play stars Paul Sparks (*Coyote on a Fence*) as a confused, frustrated, and conflicted man. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 3/17. • Urban Stages, 259 W. 30th St. (877-737-3285).

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)
A 90-minute crash-course through the Bard's works, including a nine-second *Hamlet*. $25–$55. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2, 5, and 8, Sun. at 4. • Century Center for the Performing Arts, 111 E. 15th St. (212-239-6200).

De La Guarda
A raucous show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. $20–$50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Fri. at 10:30, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. • Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (212-239-6200).

The Donkey Show
A wild, loose disco-musical adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with even looser morals. $39. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10:30. • El Flamingo, 547 W. 21st St. (212-307-4100).

Fool for Love
Sam Shepard's drama about two former lovers who reunite at a run-down hotel at the edge of the Mojave Desert. $35. Mon.–Sat. at 8. • 29th Street Rep Theatre, 212 W. 29th St. (212-206-1515).

Forbidden Broadway 20th Anniversary Celebration
Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof of musicals past and present. $49.50–$55. Mon., Tues., Fri., and Sat. at 8:15, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. • Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

Four
Twentysomething playwright Christopher Shinn found success in a Worth Street production of this drama last year, and has been rewarded with this MTC transfer. Directed by Jeff Cohen, Shinn's drama tracks the lives of four ordinary folks who meet at a Hartford, Connecticut, July 4 celebration. $45. Tues.–Sun. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • MTC Stage 2 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).

Further Than the Furthest Thing
Neil Pepe directs an ambitious new drama by Zinnie Harris, in which a volcanic eruption forces residents to flee a small island off the South African coast. The play tracks the refugees' resettlement to Southampton, England. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and Sun. at 2:30 and 7. • MTC Stage 1 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).

Golden Ladder
Donna Spector's new play about a woman's reconciliation with her family. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Players Theatre, 115 MacDougal St. (212-239-6200).

Good Time Blues
Genovis Albright and Madame Pat Tandy star in this blues revue. $30. Sat. and Sun. at 3, Mon. at 8. Through 4/28. • John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

★ Homebody/Kabul
In this prescient drama by Tony Kushner, the justly heralded author of *Angels in America*, a London woman becomes obsessed with Afghanistan, and her husband and daughter journey to the country after receiving a report that she has been murdered. Written over several years before September 11, the drama features Dylan Baker and Linda Emond. $50–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 1:30. • New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (212-239-6200).

★ Homecoming
Lauren Weedman, a wry commentator on *The Daily Show With Jon Stewart*, returns with her solo comedic show, directed by Maryann Lombardi. $35. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. Through 3/10. • ArcLight Theater, 152 W. 71st St. (212-239-6200).

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change
They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. A musical revue about heterosexual love. $49.50–$60. Mon., Tues., Fri., and Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 8/1/96. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

Iphigeneia at Aulis
Agamemnon and his daughter Iphigeneia clash in this Euripides classic, directed by the Pearl Theatre's Shepard Sobel. $28–$25. Tues. at 7, Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2. • Theatre 80, 80 St. Marks Pl. (212-598-9802).

★ La Lupe: My Life, My Destiny
Carmen Rivera's successful musical about the salsa star returns, starring Doreen Montalvo. Tuesday performances are in English; all others are in Spanish. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 6:30, Sat. and Sun. at 2. • Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).

Love, Janis
An enjoyable new bio-musical based on *Love, Janis* by Joplin's sister Laura and performed by a trio of actresses. Amelia Campbell, Orfeh, and Kristen Lee Kelly star. $35–$75. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. • Village Theater, 158 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).

The Matchmaker
Tony winner Anne Manahan (*The Beauty Queen of Leenane*) plays the witty Kerry County matchmaker Dicky Mick Dicky O'Connor, opposite Des Keogh, in John B. Keane's drama. $35–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 3/31. • Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (212-727-2737).

Naked Boys Singing
Just like a regular musical revue, but without pants. $35–$50. Mon., Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, and Sun. at 3 and 7. • Actor's Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. So. (212-239-6200).

Necessary Targets
(See John Simon's review in this issue.) Based on interviews Eve Ensler (*Vagina Monologues*) conducted in Yugoslavia, the drama tracks two American women, a psychiatrist and a writer, who travel to Bosnia. $60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 3. • Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (212-239-6200).

★ Occupant
The very busy Edward Albee opens his new drama about Louise Nevelson, the iconoclastic artist known best for her environmental sculpture. A sensational Anne Bancroft plays the artist; Anthony Page directs. $45–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Signature Theatre, 555 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).

★ One Man
The frighteningly good actor Steven Berkoff returns with a suitably dark suite of solo one-acts, including his creepy rendition of *The Tell-Tale Heart*, the masochistic story *Actor*, and *Dog*, a scary drama about an East-Ender who's more cruel than his pet pitbull. $35–$45. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. • 45 Bleecker Theatre, 45 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).

Puppetry of the Penis
An oddly innocent lesson in "the ancient Australian art of genital origami." Two Australian comedians perform penile contortions like "The Hamburger," and "The Windsurfer." $29.90–$39.90. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 9:30, Sun. at 7. • John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

Runt of the Litter
Bo Eason's semi-autobiographical solo show tracks the life of a little kid who becomes a very big NFL athlete. $37.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 3/10. • MCC Theater, 120 W. 28th St. (212-206-1515).

Siameses Show con Tola and Maruja
Colombian actors Bernardo Cardona, Carlos Mario Gallego, and Sergio Valencia star in this rambunctious comedy about two sets of twins. Also in repertory at Repertorio Español: *Vieques, La Gringa*, others. $25–$40. Call for schedule. • Gramercy Arts Center, 138 E. 27th St. (212-889-2850).

Stomp
A boisterous riot of found-object percussion. $29.50–$55. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. • Orpheum, 126 Second Ave. (212-477-2477).

★ The Syringa Tree
Kate Blumberg plays 28 characters in Pamela Gien's superb solo drama about a young girl coming to terms with life in sixties South Africa. It's a surprising and unpredictable, utterly believable, and affecting tale of family love and loss amid the violence of apartheid. $49.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (212-307-4100).

Tape
Already adapted into a film directed by Richard Linklater, Stephen Belber's intimate drama about three friends who reunite ten years after their high-school graduation returns to the stage. Belber has expanded the drama considerably, and forsaken Hollywood gentry for members of its original Off-Off Broadway cast. $25. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat at 7 and 10. Through 3/9. • Jose Quintero Theatre, 534 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding
A wedding and reception, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. $75–$80. Thurs.–Sun. at 7, Sun. at 2. • St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St., and Vinnie Black's Coliseum, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

Underneath the Lintel
In Glen Berger's new play, subtitled "The Mystery of the Abandoned Trousers," a librarian begins a peculiar investigation after discovering a returned book that is 123 years overdue. $40. Tues.–Thurs. and Sat. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (212-239-6200).

★ The Vagina Monologues
Eve Ensler's oral history of a body part stitches together testimony from women from all over the world, from those who have experienced terrible abuse to those who have invented cute nicknames for this play's namesake. Originally a one-woman show, it's now performed by a rotating trio of actresses. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

Off-Off Broadway

Arms and the Man/The Dance of Death
Two productions, in repertory: Ernest Johns directs George Bernard Shaw's wartime comedy and Karen Lordi directs August Strindberg's dark classic. $15–$40. Call for schedule. Through 3/28. • Jean Cocteau Repertory, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).

Barman
This dark new drama by Alex Dawson (*WC*) was inspired by the playwright's bartending career. $15. Thurs.–Sat. at 7:30, Sun. at 4. Through 3/24. • Kraine Theater, 85 E. 4th St. (212-206-1515).

The Bomb
International Wow Company (*Hyperreal America*) stages a large-cast drama about Oppenheimer, Lacan, September 11, and more. $12–$15. Wed.–Sun. at 8, Sat. at 3. • Flamboyan Theatre, 107 Suffolk St. (212-886-4551).

Borough Tales: Brooklyn
Short Brooklyn-based fairy tales by Melissa James Gibson, Jeffrey M. Jones, and others. $15. Wed.–Sat. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • Blue Heron Arts Center, 121 E. 24th St. (212-279-4200).

Broken Boughs
Four short southern-fried works by Clay McLeod Chapman (*Pumpkin Pie Show*). $15. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/24. • Blue Heron Arts Center, 121 E. 24th St. (212-539-3500).

Chocolate in Heat
Betty Shamieh's successful Fringe solo show returns, subtitled "Growing Up Arab in America." $10. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/21. • Theater for the New City, 155 First Ave. (212-254-1109).

Circle
Horse Trade stages Suzanne Bachner's bi-coastal comedy about sexpots in Los Angeles and New York. $10–$15. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10:30. • Kraine Theater, 85 E. 4th St. (212-206-1515).

Criss Angel Mindfreak
A futuristic illusion and escape art show. $15–$55. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Fri. at 10, Wed. at 3, Sat. at 2 and 5. • World Underground Theater at WWF New York, Broadway, at 43rd St. (212-307-4100).

Dance, My Darling, Dance
Collision Theory riffs on film-noir motifs and gumshoe narratives. $12. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. 3/9–3/30. • Ohio Theater, 66 Wooster St. (212-924-0077).

★ Drummer Wanted
Downtown star Richard Maxwell returns with his latest work, an odd tale about a housebound 29-year-old suburban drummer. $20. Thurs.–Sun. at 7. • Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. (212-966-3651).

Fanatics
Ellen Beckerman's EB&C stages a new play about Galileo. $12. Thurs.–Mon. at 8:30. Through 4/1. • Here, 145 Sixth Ave. (212-647-0202).

★ The Guys
Susan Sarandon and Anthony LaPaglia star in first-time playwright Anne Nelson's surprisingly powerful two-person drama about a fire captain who asks a journalist to help him write eulogies for his fallen men. $55. Mon.–Thurs. at 7. • The Flea, 41 White St. (212-206-1515).

Hamlet
Czechoslovak-American Marionette Theater revives its successful 1997 production of the classic. $10–$17. Thurs.–Sat. at 7:30, Sun. at 5. Through 3/17. • La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-206-1515).

Love Seats for Virginia Woolf
Mia Katigbak and Stephen Nisbet star in Randy Gener's drama about Woolf. Free. Call for schedule. • A: D/B Project Space, 116 Portland Ave., Brooklyn (718-855-9394).

Maria del Bosco (Sex & Racing Cars: A Sound Opera)
The latest Richard Foreman production tackles horny ballerinas who fall in love with a race car. $15. Tues., Thurs.–Sun. at 8. • Ontological Theater at St. Mark's Church, 131 E. 10th St. (212-533-4650).

The Master Builder
Century Center presents the tenth production in its twelve-play Ibsen series, a drama about a senior architect who becomes involved with a younger woman. $15. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 3/24. • Century Center Ballroom Theatre, 111 E. 15 St. (212-279-4200).

Melancholy Baby!
Ars Nova and Second City Theatricals stage the purportedly "rediscovered" musical adaptation of *Hamlet*. $15. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2. Through 3/31. • Ars Nova Theater, 511 W. 54th St. (212-977-1700).

Monday Night Magic
Internationally known magicians steal your watch, etc. $29.50–$32.50. Mon. at 8. • McGinn/Cazale Theater, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-615-6432).

Mono
An inventive, interactive play set in a barlike environment, with a sock puppet. $10–$15. Thurs.–Sat. at 8. • Surf Reality, 172 Allen St. (212-358-3447).

Murder in Baker Street
Theater for the Blind stages Judd Woldin's new Sherlock Holmes comic mystery. $19. Tues.–Thurs. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • Mint Space, 311 W. 43rd St. (212-206-1515).

New York Values
Penny Arcade's latest show takes on "the death of Bohemia" in a gentrified neighborhood. $20. Wed.–Sat. at 8:30. • P.S. 122, 150 First Ave. (212-477-5288).

Permanent Visitor
A festival of plays celebrating the playwright and novelist Dawn Powell. $15. Call for schedule. • 78th Street Theatre Lab, 236 W. 78th St. (212-206-1515).

Portia Coughlan
Aaron Beall directs Marina Carr's Irish melodrama. $18. Thurs.–Sun. at 8. Through 4/7. • Times Square Theatre, 675 Eighth Ave. (212-586-7829).

Red Frogs
Ruth Margraff's new burlesque, a satirical take on Aristophanes's *The Frogs*. $17. Thurs.–Sun. at 7:30. • P.S. 122, 150 First Ave. (212-477-5288).

Scab
Women's Expressive Theater stages Sheila Callaghan's dark comedy about healing, with cameos by a talking Virgin Mary lawn ornament and a carnivorous plant. $15. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. Through 3/16. • Greenwich Street Theater, 529 Greenwich St. (212-206-1515).

★ Shopping and Fucking
Mark Ravenhill's torrid tale, a drama about a coke-addicted suit and his screwed-up slacker friends, stars Susan O'Connor and Jay Aubrey. $15. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2. • Theatre 22, 54 W. 22nd St. (212-206-1515).

Songs From Coconut Hill
A festival of Latin-themed plays by writers like Carmen Rivera and Candido Tirado. $15. Call for schedule. • Here, 145 Sixth Ave. (212-647-0202).

★ To You, The Birdie! (Phèdre)
The Wooster Group's playful adaptation of Racine's *Phèdre*, as translated by Paul Schmidt, is an often comic, weirdly athletic romp. The company's ever-inspired regulars, Willem Dafoe and Kate Valk, deliver strong performances and even play badminton with Frances McDormand. $25–$30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3. • St. Ann's Warehouse, 38 Water St., Brooklyn (212-966-3651).

Tumor Brainiowicz
S. I. Witkiewicz's 1920 Polish drama about a sharp mathematician who goes mad, with puppets. $12–$15. Thurs.–Sat. at 10, Sun. at 5:30. • La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710).

Unequalibrium
A new solo show by Alexander Lyras (*desperelics*). $30. Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sun. and Mon. at 7. • Gene Frankel Theater, 24 Bond St. (212-462-3107).

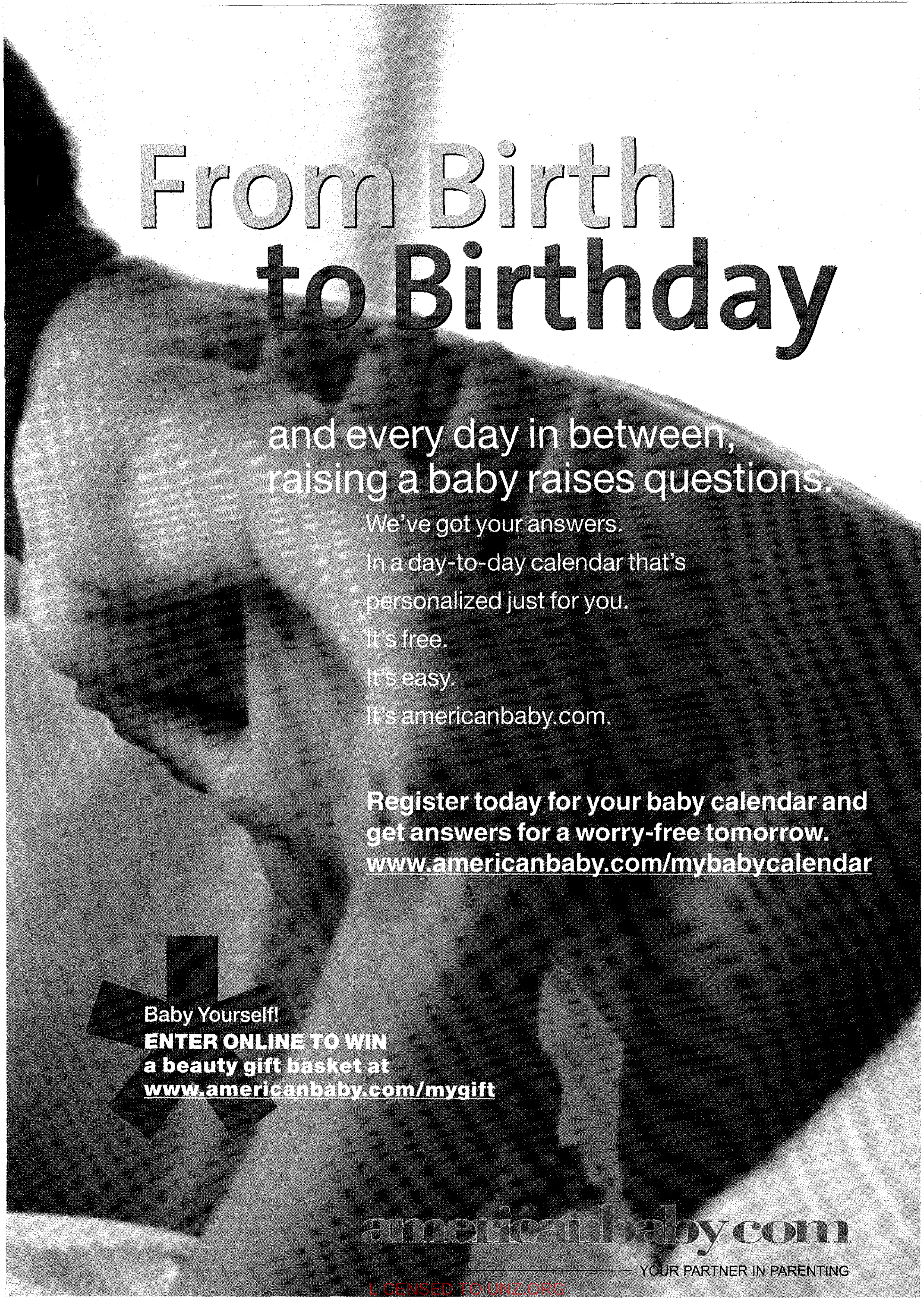
Warriors
Michel Garneau's timely new play takes on the Canadian war machine. $20. Call for schedule. Through 4/6. • 45 Bleecker Theatre, 45 Bleecker St. (212-560-7240).

Onstage

Wag the Dog

Almost perfectly timed to the White House's bungled unveiling and sudden dissolution of the Office of Strategic Influence, the political satire **Warriors** introduces "the financier" and "the best idea man in Canada," two greedy bastards who just landed the advertising account for the Canadian armed forces. Written by frequent Robert Lepage collaborator Michel Garneau, the two-person drama features Michael McCartney (pictured), Nicholas Keene, and an ambitious multimedia installation by the excellent digital artist Lew Baldwin. Performances begin March 7 at the Culture Project, 45 Bleecker's promising downstairs space. (See "Off-Off Broadway.")

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE WARRIORS.



From Birth to Birthday

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cue Art

Edited by Edith Newhall

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Georg Baselitz
Two sculptures from 1994 covered in patterned cloth, and a group of watercolors from 1998; through 3/30. • Werner, 4 E. 77th St. (212-988-1623).

★ Walter Beck
Tempera-and-starch paintings of images from nature by an artist (1864–1954) who pioneered the technique of painting on wet starch; through 3/29. • York, 21 E. 65th St. (212-772-9155).

★ Max Beckmann
The first New York exhibition of the artist's sculptures, of which he made only eight, in 35 years, plus a selection of his paintings; through 5/24. • Feigen, 34 E. 69th St. (212-628-0700).

David Hockney
Paintings, gouaches, drawings, watercolors, and collages from the artist's personal collection and related to his stage-set and costume designs for the Metropolitan Opera Company's original 1981 production of *Parade*, which is being revived by the Met on March 4; through 3/30. • Gray, 1018 Madison Ave. (212-472-8787).

Robert Morris
A selection of the sculptor's works on paper from the sixties; through 4/4. • Castelli, 59 E. 79th St. (212-249-4470).

Tony Scherman
Large-scale encaustic paintings that depict magnified images of celebrities' faces; through 4/6. • Winston Wächter Mayer, 39 E. 78th St. (212-327-2526).

★ Jack Tworkov
A survey of paintings and drawings by the late New York School artist exploring his Abstract Expressionist work of the late fifties and early sixties; through 4/13. • Mitchell, Innes & Nash, 1018 Madison Ave. (212-744-7400).

57th Street Area

John Baldessari
Two new series by the California conceptual artist in which he juxtaposes movie stills, photographs of "real life" (condominium buildings, seascapes, etcetera), and painted shapes; through 3/30. • Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (212-977-7160).

Shirley Goldfarb
Abstract, predominantly pink paintings made by the American artist (1925–1980) after she moved to Paris in 1954; through 4/6. • Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (212-752-1223).

David Humphrey
Brightly colored paintings and sculptures that wring unexpected expressiveness from such conventional subjects as poodles, people at leisure, and stuffed bears; through 3/23. • Littlejohn Contemporary, 41 E. 57th St. (212-980-2323).

★ Loren MacIver
Paintings and drawings from the late thirties and early forties, when the artist was exhibiting at Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York and developing her poetic style of representation of objects drawn from her daily life in Greenwich Village, Cape Cod, and Key West; through 3/23. • Alexandre, 41 E. 57th St. (212-755-2828).

Richard Patterson
Three new large-scale paintings in the artist's signature mix of abstraction and photo-realism, depicting such icons of American pop culture as Daisy Duke and a Dallas Cowboy cheerleader; through 3/23. • Cohan, 41 W. 57th St. (212-755-7171).

Gerhard Richter
A selection of the artist's abstract paintings from the eighties, including two triptychs from 1986, *Fisch* and *Schiff*; through 4/13. • Mathes, 41 E. 57th St. (212-752-5135).

Esphyr Slobodkina
Assemblages, sculptures, multimedia constructions, jewelry, paintings, and clothes dating from the 1930s through 2001, by the Russian-born abstract artist; through 3/23. • Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., (212-307-5730).

★ Leon Polk Smith
Fourteen circular abstract paintings from 1955 that marked a radical change from the artist's earlier Mondrian-influenced work and were inspired by simple line drawings of tennis balls, basketballs, and baseballs that he saw in an athletic catalogue; through 3/30. • Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. (212-397-6780).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Bryan Crockett
New sculptures; through 3/30. • Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. (212-965-0753).

Stefana McClure
Minimal monochromatic works on paper that are actually accumulations of film subtitles inscribed onto transfer paper; through 3/23. • 123 Watts, 123 Watts St. (212-219-1482).

★ Jockum Nordström/Martin Kippenberger
Drawings and collages that juxtapose images from the artist's personal experiences and from nature motifs typical to northern Swedish art/Autobiographical drawings that the German artist (1953–1997) made on hotel stationery. Through 3/30. • Zwirner, 43 Greene St. (212-966-9074).

★ Irving Petlin
Large-scale pastel drawings on linen that represent the artist's speculations and meditations on Old Testament mythology; through 3/30. • Kent, 67 Prince St. (212-966-4500).

Michael Phelan
Paintings and sculpture that use traditional Japanese techniques to create a Zen version of the American landscape; through 3/23. • 249 Centre St. (212-334-9255).

★ Kim Sooja
A Mirror Woman, an installation by a Korean artist who uses mirrors and Korean bedcovers, traditionally given to the newly wedded couple, to comment on love, happiness, wealth, and the illusive quality of these human dreams; through 5/18. • Blum, 99 Wooster St. (212-343-0441).

★ H. C. Westermann
A survey of lithographs made by the sculptor between 1967 and 1972 that depict narratives involving cargo ships, derelict buildings, and diverse characters in wastelands from the Arctic to the Amazon; through 3/30. • Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway (212-941-0012).

Se-en Wong
Large-scale paintings that depict the artist in a variety of roles; through 3/30. • Deitch, 76 Grand St. (212-343-7300).

Chelsea

David Bowes
Decorative allegorical paintings that make multiple references to art history; through 4/3. • Nosei, 530 W. 22nd St. (212-741-8695).

Anne Chu
Sculptures and monotypes inspired by medieval culture; through 3/30. • Burgin, 243 W. 18th St. (212-462-2668).

Mike Cockrill
Large, colorful paintings based on unposed snapshots of the artist's daughter and her friends at play; through 3/23. • Foster, 529 W. 20th St. (212-229-0044).

★ Amy Cutler
Paintings and drawings of detailed narratives of whimsy and violence enacted by human and animal characters drawn from fairy tales, medieval history, Boy Scout manuals, and other sources; through 3/23. • Tonkonow, 535 W. 22nd St. (212-255-8450).

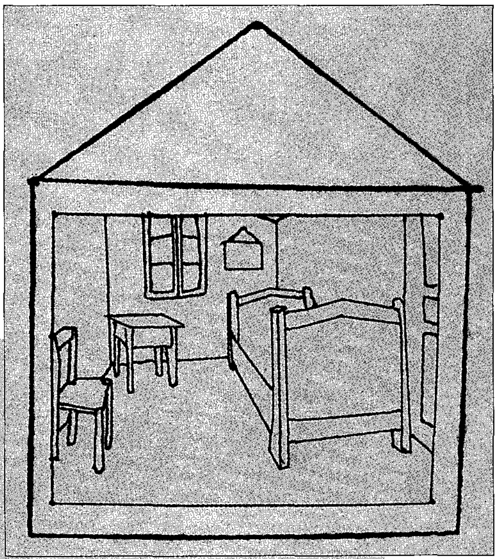
Lewis deSoto
Three new sculptural installations based on the inherent conflict between having been raised Roman Catholic and later turning to the teachings of Buddhism. Through 3/30. • Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. (212-741-3318).

Joy Episalla
An old couch that the artist has reinvented by removing its upholstery and slicing it into parts, a video recording the "operation," and photographs of the remains of plumbing ripped from a building slated for demolition; through 3/23. • Debs, 525 W. 26th St. (212-643-2070).

Peter Fischli and David Weiss
Two new installations and three sculptures from the

Talent

In the Bedroom



In her site-specific installation *Drawing Rooms*, **Anita Thacher** manages to pay homage to the space-defining yarn works of Fred Sandback and to Van Gogh's *Bedroom*, using string and wool to "draw" two rooms (pictured, a detail), one borrowing the shape of the actual gallery space and the other angled within that space. It might also be considered a droll rejoinder to Van Gogh's own words about his painting: "I enormously enjoyed doing this interior of nothing at all." At Art Resources Transfer, Inc., 210 Eleventh Avenue, near 25th Street; through March 23.

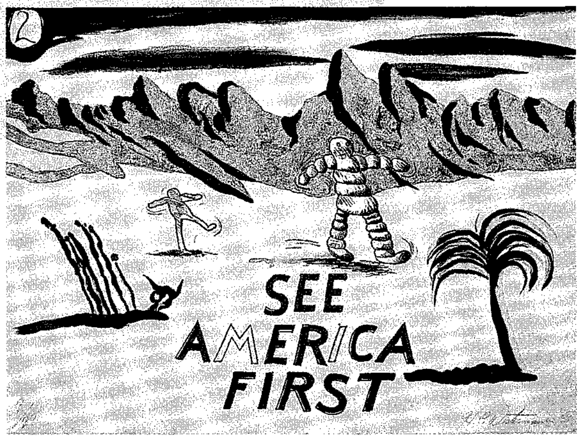
Ground Rules Galleries are generally open Tuesday through Saturday, from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6. Stars (★) indicate our editors' recommendations.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ART RESOURCES TRANSFER, INC.

On View

Off the Press

Those who won't be able to catch this year's two **H. C. Westermann** retrospectives—his sculptures and drawings at Washington's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, through May 14, and his entire printed works, at the University of Virginia Art Museum in Charlottesville, through March 31—can at least savor the influential artist's unique sense of humor in a New York survey of his lithographs. Made on only three occasions between 1967 and 1972 (pictured, a work from the series "See America First"), Westermann's witty images of wastelands from the Arctic to the Amazon combine references to his own stints as a U.S. Marine and an acrobat and to movies as varied as *Red Planet Mars* and *Le Quai des Brumes*. At Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway, at Prince Street; through March 30.



eighties; through 4/20. • Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. (212-243-0200).

Naomi Fisher
Photographs and drawings of figures in lush tropical settings that are simultaneously seductive and disturbing; through 3/23. • Lombard-Freid, 531 W. 26th St. (212-967-8040).

Rainer Ganahl
A series of works on paper that explores the artist's dreams; through 3/20. • Baumgartner, 418 W. 15th St. (212-633-2276).

Siobhàn Hapaska
A sculpture and sound installation; through 3/30. • 521 W. 21st St. (212-414-4144).

Oliver Herring
A new multiple-projection video that utilizes numerous performers, sets, and editing techniques; large-scale sculptural photographic cutouts, and a knitted aerial sculpture that connects the gallery's office and exhibition space; through 3/23. • Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. (212-633-6999).

★ Karen Kilimnik
Paintings and photographs that suggest a dreamy, nostalgic vision of the past, mixing elements of fairy tales, history, myths, and reality; through 3/20. • 303, 525 W. 22nd St. (212-255-1121).

Win Knowlton
Minimal sculptures on the theme of weather, made with concrete and perforated sheet metal; through 3/30. • Rodgers, 529 W. 20th St. (212-414-9810).

Annika Larsson
Two video works by the Swedish artist, *Dog* (2001) and *Poliisi* (2002), each of which use actors, costumes, and music; through 3/23. • Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. (212-627-6000).

Cotter Luppi/Mark Dean Veca
Decorative colored-pencil drawings that suggest both the biological and the industrial/Drawings that offer a contemporary version of the images common to *toile de jouy*, an eighteenth-century French textile, and the engravings of Daniel Marot. Through 3/30. • Silverstein, 520 W. 21st St. (212-929-7902).

Wes Mills
Recent drawings; through 3/30. • Helman, 601 W. 26th St. (212-929-1545).

★ Alice Neel/Yayoi Kusama
A selection of the artist's drawings in which she positioned such universal themes as motherhood and death within the sphere of her private life and social consciousness/The first American exhibition of *Solitude of the Earth*, a sculptural installation created in 1994. Through 3/30. • Miller, 524 W. 26th St. (212-366-4774).

★ Claes Oldenburg
Rarely exhibited early drawings, including landscape and nude studies, street scenes, *Store* drawings related to the artist's 1961 environment of neighborhood shops, and monoprints from the *Ray Gun* series of 1960–61; through 3/16. • Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. (212-255-1105).

Damián Ortega
Sculptures, photographs, and videos inspired by such everyday objects as toys, golf balls, weeds, pick-axes, and tortillas; through 3/30. • D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. (212-352-9460).

Enoc Perez
A personal diary of drawings and paintings that explores the psyche of the city; through 3/30. • Dee/Glasoe, 545 W. 20th St. (212-924-7545).

Ellen Phelan
Paintings that continue the artist's blurring of the distinctions between the real and the imagined, this time depicting various sites in the landscape surrounding her Adirondack home on Lake Champlain; through 4/13. • Senior & Shopmaker, 21 E. 26th St. (212-213-6767).

Ugo Rondinone
A large-scale mirrored wall sculpture, painted sculptures of clowns cast in fiberglass from live models, and a lighted sign installed on the gallery's roof; through 4/20. • Marks, 523 W. 24th St. (212-243-0200).

Suzy Spence/Daisuke Nakayama
Paintings chronicling the artist's relationships with men/Drawings that underscore the complexities of relationships in contemporary society. Through 3/23. • Rare, 435 W. 14th St. (212-645-5591).

Anita Thacher/Eleni Mylonas
A site-specific installation that pays tribute to the space-defining works of Fred Sandback and Van Gogh's painting *Bedroom*, using string to "draw" two rooms/A five-minute video piece, *Venice*, that plays on a continuous loop like a perpetually moving film still with sound. Through 3/23. • Art Resources Transfer, 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-691-5956).

★ Leo Villareal
Light pieces that create constantly changing patterns and rhythms; through 3/23. • Gering, 534 W. 22nd St. (646-336-7183).

Julia Wachtel
Paintings that depict unpredictable juxtapositions of cartoon imagery; through 3/30. • Thorp, 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-691-6565).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Shapolsky
Works by six abstract painters, among them Ilya Bolotowsky, Nassos Daphnis, and Michael Loew, who worked and socialized together; through 4/27. • 152 E. 65th St. (212-452-1094).

57th Street Area

★ AXA
"Thin Skin: The Fickle Nature of Bubbles, Spheres, and Inflatable Structures," works by Akakçee, Boroson, Byars, the Eameses, Eliasson, Manzoni, Neto, Warhol, others; through 4/13. • 787 Seventh Ave. (212-554-4818), Mon.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. noon–5.

Haime
"From Stone to Foam," sculptures in various materials by Calder, Cragg, Dill, Dubuffet, Horn, others; through 4/6. • 41 E. 57th St. (212-888-3550).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Exit Art
"Reactions," visual and poetic contributions on 8½-by-11-inch pieces of paper by over 900 individuals from around the world capturing how the events of September 11 altered their lives, and original artworks from *September 11*, two graphic novels of reactions from comic-book writers and artists, the sale of which benefits organizations aiding families of victims of the September 11 tragedy; through 3/30. • 548 Broadway (212-966-7745).

Chelsea

Gladstone
Arte Povera sculptures by Anselmo, Fabro, Kounellis, Merz, Zorio, others; through 3/16. • 515 W. 24th St. (212-206-9300).

Greene Naftali
"Pictures," paintings and photographs by Douglas, Graham, Goldblatt, Orozco, Pfeiffer, Ryman, Snow, others; through 3/23. • 526 W. 26th St. (212-463-7770).

Photography

Lawrence Beck
New color photographs of gardens; through 3/23. • Sonnabend, 536 W. 22nd St. (212-627-1018).

★ Cook
Images of women by women photographers, among them D. Arbus, Beecroft, Cox, Grannan, Kurland, Lee, Mann, Sherman; through 3/30. • 1063 Madison Ave. (212-737-3550).

Neil Folberg
Images of stars, planets, nebulae, and galaxies as seen against details of landscape and architecture; through 3/23. • Klotz/Sirmon, 511 W. 25th St. (212-741-4764).

★ Lee Friedlander
Vintage and modern prints from the photographer's classic early series of motel rooms; through 3/9. • Borden, 560 Broadway (212-431-0166).

Axel Hütte
Large-format close-up photographs of bamboo stands in Hawaii and works from an ongoing series in which landscape is framed in the crisscrossed bars of a train bridge; through 3/23. • Cohan Leslie and Browne, 138 Tenth Ave. (212-206-8710).

ICP
"New Histories of Photography 3—The First Snapshots: At Home and Abroad," 60 pioneering Kodak snapshots from the 1880s and 1890s, from the collections of ICP and the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York; through 3/17. • "Foreign Body: Photography and the Prelude to Genetic Modification." A look at the way individuals were portrayed between 1852 and 1945 in medical and scientific photography, portraiture, and popular imagery; through 3/17. • "Another Vietnam: Pictures of the War From

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF LENNON WEINBERG, INC.

the Other Side." An exhibit of more than 120 black-and-white photographs by Vietnamese soldier-photographers, co-organized by ICP and National Geographic; through 3/17. • "Hidden Truths: Bloody Sunday 1972." Photographs by Fulvio Grimaldi, Fred Hoare, Gilles Peress, Robert White, and others documenting the protest march in Derry, Northern Ireland, in which 13 civilians were killed by British soldiers; through 3/17. • 1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. (212-857-0045), Tues.-Thurs. 10-5, Fri. 10-8, Sat. and Sun. 10-6; $8, $6 students and seniors

Simen Johan
Color photographs of young people in curious situations; through 4/6. • Milo, 552 W. 24th St. (212-414-0370).

Morthland
"Helen Gee: The Limelight Years, Photographs 1954–1961," images by artists who exhibited at the legendary Greenwich Village gallery and coffeehouse, among them Berenice Abbott, Louis Faurer, Robert Frank, and Lisette Model; through 4/13. • 511 W. 25th St. (212-242-7767).

★ Robert Rauschenberg/Robert Heinecken
Photems, totemic arrangements of black-and-white photographs from the fifties through 1979, when the artist endeavored to photograph the entire United States inch by inch/Mysterious photographic montages that were fabricated by the artist in 1970 by using the pages of pornographic magazines as negatives. Through 4/6. • Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (212-759-7999).

★ Barney Rosset
War photographs taken in China between 1944 and 1945, when the photographer, who was later the owner of Grove Press, was an officer in the U.S. Army Signal Corps Photographic Service; through 3/23. • Gat, 1100 Madison Ave. (212-327-0441).

Frank Thiel
Large-scale color photographs documenting the ongoing reconstruction of Berlin; through 3/30. • Kelly, 528 W. 29th St. (212-239-1181).

★ UBS/PaineWebber
"A Thousand Hounds: A Walk With Dogs Through the History of Photography," images of dogs from the past 150 years, from the book *A Thousand Hounds* (Taschen, 2000), featuring photographs by Erwitt, Lartigue, Man Ray, Steichen, Warhol, Wegman, others; through 3/29. • 1285 Sixth Ave. (212-713-2885).

Heidi Zumbrun
Color images of toys mauled by the artist's dog; through 4/6. • Meyerowitz, 580 Broadway (212-625-3434), Wed.-Sat. 11-6.

Museums

American Craft Museum
"Mikromegas." Whimsical stickpins by well-known jewelry designers; through 4/28. • "Objects for Use: Handmade by Design." Functional works by 200 artists, among them Aroner, Hotchkiss, McKie, Rice, Teraki, Walden; through 4/28. • 40 W. 53rd St. (212-956-3535), daily 10-6, Thurs. 10-8 (pay what you wish 6-8); $7.50, $4 students and seniors.

American Folk Art Museum
★ "Darger: The Henry Darger Collection at the American Folk Art Museum." The museum's first presentation of 26 large-scale, rarely seen paintings, plus drawings, original manuscripts, books, and sketches from the artist's archives; through 6/23. • "American Radiance: The Ralph Esmerian Gift to the American Folk Art Museum." Paintings, sculpture, pottery, textiles, furniture, and scrimshaw recently donated to the museum by the folk-art collector; through 6/2. • 45 W. 53rd St. (212-977-7170), Tues.-Sun. 10-6 (Fri. to 8); $9, $5 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History
"Pearls." The first exhibition ever presented on pearls, weaving science, art, history, and literature into the story of pearl-forming mollusks; through 4/14. • "The Butterfly Conservatory: Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter." An annual exhibit featuring 400 to 500 live butterflies from Central, South, and North America; through 5/27. • "Meeting God: Elements of Hindu Devotion." A portrait of Hinduism in photographs, devotional objects, and video-portraits; through 3/21. • Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100); daily 10-5:45 (on Fri., Rose Center is open to 8:45 for weekly jazz concerts); $10 suggested contribution, $7.50 students and seniors, $6 children.

Asia Society and Museum
★ "The New Way of Tea." A two-part exhibition running concurrently at the Asia Society and Museum and the Japan Society, examining the contemporary Japanese tea ceremony through traditional and experimental environments, utensils, and performances; 3/6–5/19. • "The Creative Eye: New Perspectives on Asia Society's Rockefeller Collection." Selections from the Society's renowned permanent collection; through 4/14. • 725 Park Ave. (212-288-6400), Tues.-Sun. 11-6 (Fri. 11-9, free admission 6-9); $7, $5 students and seniors.

Brooklyn Museum of Art
"Jewish Life in Ancient Egypt." Ancient Aramaic papyri revealing Egyptian life during Dynasty 27 (525–402 B.C.), the period of Persian rule in Egypt and the Near East; through 5/12. • 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000), Wed.-Fri. 10-5, Sat. 11-6 (till 11 P.M. on the first Sat. of every month), Sun. 11-6; $6, $3 students and seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution
★ "Russel Wright: Creating American Lifestyle." A retrospective of the American designer's work, including examples of his dinnerware, furniture, appliances, textiles, and interiors; through 9/15. • "Glass of the Avant-Garde: From Vienna Secession to Bauhaus, The Torsten Bröhan Collection From the Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas, Madrid." Outstanding examples of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century glass from Austria, Bohemia, and Germany; through 3/31. • 2 E. 91st St. (212-849-8300), Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. noon-5, Tues. 10-9 (5-9, free admission); $8, $3 students and seniors.

Dia Center for the Arts
★ "Mapping the Studio I (Fat Chance John Cage)." A new large-scale video installation by Bruce Nauman that records the nocturnal activity in the artist's studio of his cat and an infestation of mice during the summer of 2000; through 6/16. • "Alfred Jensen: *Concordance*." Key paintings by the Guatemalan-born Danish artist, including his final artistic statement, *Great Pyramid*, which is on public exhibition for the first time; through 6/16. • "Jorge Pardo and Gilberto Zorio: *Reverb*." The former's redesign of Dia's bookshop, lobby, and gallery and the latter's *Microfonia*, a sound work first created in 1969; through 6/16. • "Diana Thater: *Knots + Surfaces*." An environment of layered video projections and clustered monitors that interacts with the open space of Dia's third-floor gallery; through 6/16. • 548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566), Wed.-Sun. noon-6; $6, $3 students and seniors.

Frick Collection
"Six Paintings From the Former Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney on Loan From the Greentree Foundation." Paintings by Degas, Manet, Picasso, and Redon; through 4/21. • 1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700); Tues.-Sat. 10-6, Sun. 1-6; $10, $5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery
★ "Seeing and Believing: The Art of Nancy Burson." A survey of more than 100 photographs and multimedia artworks by this artist known for her digitally enhanced composites focusing on the human face; through 4/20. • 100 Washington Square East (212-998-6780), Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11-6, Wed. 11-8, Sat. 11-5; $2.50 suggested donation.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
★ "Brazil: Body and Soul." A survey of artistic production in Brazil from the seventeenth century to the present; through 5/29. • 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (212-423-3500), Sun.-Wed. 9-6, Fri. and Sat. 9-8 (Fri. 6-8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; admission for Norman Rockwell is $15; general admission $12, $8 students and seniors.

Japan Society
★ "The New Way of Tea." A two-part exhibition running concurrently at the Japan Society and the Asia Society and Museum, examining the contemporary Japanese tea ceremony through traditional and experimental environments, utensils, and performances; 3/6–5/19. • 333 E. 47th St. (212-832-1155), Tues.-Fri. 11-6, Sat. and Sun. 11-5; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Jewish Museum
"The Emergence of Jewish Artists in Nineteenth-Century Europe." An exhibition focusing on the creativity of Jewish artists within the context of nineteenth-century art, featuring paintings by Daniel Moritz Oppenheim, Camille Pissarro, Simeon Solomon, and others; through 3/17. • 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-423-3200), Mon., Tues., Wed. 11-5:45; Thurs. 11-8 (Thurs. after 5, pay what you wish), Fri. 11-3, Sun. 10-5:45; $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art
★ "Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence." The first major loan exhibition of tapestries in the United States in 25 years and the first extensive survey of tapestry production between 1460 and 1560, featuring some 45 of the greatest tapestries of the period, as well as preparatory drawings and cartoon fragments; 3/12–6/19. • ★ "Orazio and Artemisia Gentileschi: Father and Daughter Painters in Baroque Italy." Approximately 50 paintings by the former, a follower of Caravaggio who become court painter to England's Charles II, and 35 by his daughter, the first woman artist known to have supported herself from her work and the subject of two biographical novels and a film; through 5/12. • ★ "Surrealism: Desire Unbound." The first major survey of Surrealism in more than twenty years, featuring more than 300 paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, photographs, and films dating from 1924 to more recent years; through 5/12. • ★ "Earthly Bodies: Irving Penn's Nudes, 1949–50." Images of voluptuous nude female torsos that the photographer, then known largely for his work for *Vogue*, made as an antidote to the artifice of fashion magazines (see Whitney Museum of American Art listing for concurrent exhibition of Penn's recent nudes); through 4/21. • ★ "Splendid Isolation: Art of Easter Island." The first American exhibition devoted to the Polynesian art of Easter Island, featuring objects dating from the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries; through 8/4. • "Bill Viola: The Quintet of Remembrance." A color-video installation inspired by the artist's study of late-medieval and early-renaissance paintings; through 5/5. • "Treasures From a Lost Civilization: Ancient Chinese Art From Sichuan." Recently excavated sculptures, bronze vessels, jade carvings, and other relics dating from the thirteenth century B. C. to the third century A. D.; 3/6–6/16. • 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-879-5500); Tues.-Thurs. and Sun. 9:30-5:30, Fri. and Sat. 9:30-9; $10 contribution, $5 students and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (212-923-3700); Tues.-Sun. 9:30-4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $10, $5 students and seniors.

Morgan Library
★ "Pierre Matisse and His Artists." An exhibition examining the role of the late Pierre Matisse and his former New York gallery, the Pierre Matisse Gallery, through the works of the artists he promoted between 1931 and 1989, among them Balthus, Jean Dubuffet, Loren MacIver, Joan Míro, and Georges Rouault; through 5/19. • 29 E. 36th St. (212-685-0008), Tues.-Thurs. 10:30-5, Fri. 10:30-8, Sat. 10:30-6, Sun. noon-6; $8, $6 students and seniors.

Museum of Jewish Heritage
"Lives Remembered: A *Shtetl* Through a Photographer's Eye." Sixty photographs of a pre-World War II *shtetl* that were taken by Zalman Kaplan, a Polish photographer in the Polish town of Szczuczyn; 3/12–8/30. • 18 First Place, Battery Park City (212-968-1800), Sun.-Wed 10-5:45, Thurs. 10-8, Fri. and the eve of Jewish holidays 10-3; $7, $5 students and seniors.

Museum of Modern Art
★ "Gerhard Richter: Forty Years of Painting." The first New York retrospective of the German artist's paintings, including 188 canvases completed since 1962 that demonstrate his mastery of such genres as gestural abstraction, landscape, and portraiture; through 5/21. • "Projects 73: Olafur Eliasson—Seeing yourself sensing." An installation that transforms the windows of the museum's Garden Hall into a work of art designed to alter viewers' perceptions; through 5/21. • "Collection Highlights." A selection of modern masterpieces from the museum's permanent collection, including works by Brancusi, Cézanne, Picasso, Pollock, and others; through 5/30. • 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); Sat.-Tues., Thurs. 10:30-5:45, Fri. 10:30-8:15 (4:30-8:15 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $10, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York
"Brotherhood: In Strength and Sorrow—Images of the FDNY," a photographic tribute to the firefighters who lost their lives in the September 11 tragedy, featuring images from the book of the same title as well as images that have not been previously published; through 6/2. • "*The Little Red Lighthouse and the Great Gray Bridge*: Illustrations by Lynd Ward." Illustrations from the 1942 children's book that were recently given to the museum; through 4/28. • 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672), Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 1-5; $5 suggested contribution, $4 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology
"Red." A look at the symbolic and aesthetic power of red as demonstrated through examples of clothing, accessories, and textiles in every shade of the color, from scarlet to crimson; through 4/20. • "Latin American Fashion: Exploring Identities on the New York Runway." An exhibition showcasing the work of Carolina Herrera, Oscar de la Renta, Isabel Toledo, Narciso Rodriguez, and other Latin American designers, as well as the work of American designers influenced by Latin American design, organized by the graduate students in FIT's Museum Studies: Costume and Textiles program; through 4/13. • Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (212-217-7642), Tues.-Fri. noon-8, Sat. 10-5; free.

National Academy of Design
★ "Architects of the Academy." Watercolors, drawings, floor and site plans, and photographs by architects who were or are Academy members, among them Henry Bacon, Cass Gilbert, Nathaniel Alexander Owings, Edward Stone, and I. M. Pei; through 4/14. • "Modernism & Abstraction: Treasures From the Smithsonian American Art Museum." Works on loan from the Smithsonian by Willem De Kooning, Philip Guston, David Hockney, Ellsworth Kelly, and others; through 4/7. • 1083 Fifth Ave. (212-369-4880), Wed., Thurs. noon-5, Fri. 10-6, Sat. and Sun. 10-5; $4.50-$8; students and seniors.

New Museum of Contemporary Art
★ "Wim Delvoye's Cloaca." An elaborate, room-size installation that replicates the human digestive system; through 4/28. • "Marlene Dumas: Name No Names." Eighty figurative works on paper by this Amsterdam-based artist known for her frank drawings of human figures and faces; through 6/2. • 583 Broadway (212-219-1222), Tue.-Sun. noon-6, Thurs. noon-8 ($3 admission Thurs. 6-8); $6, $3 artists, students, and seniors.

New York Public Library
"European Liturgal Manuscripts." Twelve medieval and Renaissance manuscripts from the library's collections; 3/8–4/6. • "Drawings by Charles Addams: *Unreal Estate*." A selection of drawings by the *New Yorker* cartoonist, of images ranging from tantalizing conditions in Hell to less than comforting settings of Mother Goose's nursery rhymes; through 6/29. • "The Public's Treasures: Americana From the New York Public Library." Seldom-displayed books and documents from the library's collections, including a copy of the first book printed in America; through 4/27. • Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (212-869-8089), Mon. 10-6, Tues. and Wed. 11-7:30, Thurs.-Sat. 10-6; free.

New-York Historical Society
"Missing: Streetscape of a City in Mourning." Photographs of memorials and shrines that sprang up around the city after September 11; recordings of oral histories of survivors of the disaster, and a space for visitors to sit and reflect on their lives today; 3/12–6/9. • ★ "Ralph Fasanella's America." A retrospective of paintings by the folk artist and labor activist (1914–1997), a second-generation Italian-American who was born in New York City; through 7/14. • "Family Matters: Century-Old New York Businesses." Documents and artifacts from ten long-lived New York City firms, among them Modell's Sporting Goods, ArtKraft Strauss Sign Company, and Rambusch Decorating Studios; through 4/28. • 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); Tues.-Sun. 11-5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center
"The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa, 1945–1994." A survey of African culture through art, film, photography, graphics, architecture, music, literature, and theater, featuring works by 55 artists from 22 countries; through 5/5. • 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084), Wed.-Sun. noon-6; $5 suggested donation.

Studio Museum in Harlem
"Yinka Shonibare." Fabric-covered, life-size mannequin figures and photographic self-portraits by a Nigerian-born, London-based artist whose work explores notions of "high art" and "low art" and "Britishness" and "Africanness"; through 3/31. • "Africaine: Candace Breitz, Wangechi Mutu, Tracey Rose, and Fatimah Tuggar." Photo-based works that examine lineages of representations of the African female body by four African artists working in the United States and abroad; through 3/31. • "Race in Digital Space." Works created by 50 artists between the late sixties and the present that use film, video, audio, new media, and web techniques to explore the effects of technoculture on the social constructions of race and ethnicity; through 3/31. • "Collection in Context: Recent Photography Acquisitions." Works by Jules Allen, Dawoud Bey, Gordon Parks, Carrie Mae Weems, and others; through 3/31. • 144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500), Wed., Thurs., Sat., and Sun. noon-6, Fri. noon-8; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art
★ "2002 Biennial." The largest Whitney Biennial exhibition since 1981, presenting the works of 113 artists and collaborative teams within the museum and outdoors, in Central Park; 3/7–5/26. • ★ "Dancer: 1999 Nudes by Irving Penn." An exhibition of the photographer's recent series of nudes of the dancer Alexandra Beller that is concurrent with an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art of his nudes from 1949 and 1950; through 5/12. • 945 Madison Ave. (212-570-3676); Tues.-Thurs., Sat., Sun. 11-6, Fri. 1-9 (pay what you wish Fri. 6-9); $10, $8 students, seniors, and groups of fifteen or more.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris
★ "Jane Hammond: Back Stage—Secrets of Scene Painting." A monumental, site-specific painting that fills the back wall of the gallery with a series of overlapping vignettes that depict distinct improvisational performances and theatrical spaces; through 4/5. • "Lucky DeBellevue: Khlysty, the Owls, and the Others." An installation of the artist's humorously low-tech sculptures constructed from chenille pipe-stem cleaners; through 4/5. • 120 Park Ave. (917-663-2550), Mon.-Fri. 11-6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's
3/8 at 10 and 2: "Fine and Rare Wines." On view from 3/3. • 20 Rockefeller Plaza (212-636-2000).

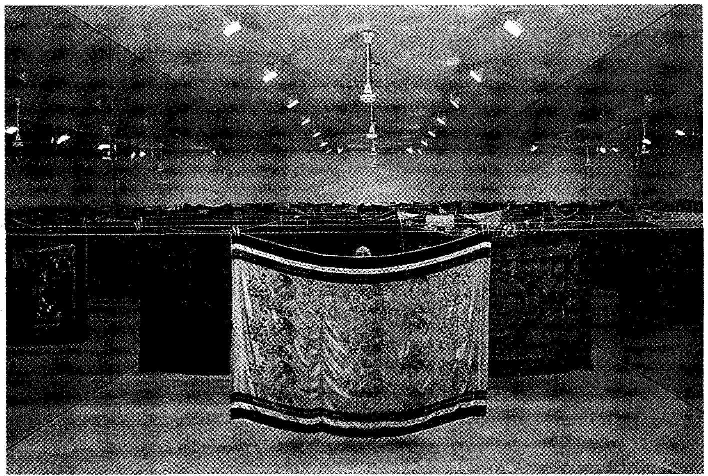
Doyle
3/12 at 10: "Fine Furniture, Decorations, and Paintings." On view from 3/9. • 175 E. 87th St. (212-427-2730).

Sotheby's
3/6 at 10:15 and 2: "Watches and Clocks." On view from 3/1. • 1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (212-606-7000).

Swann Galleries
3/7 at 10:30 and 2:30: "19th and 20th Century Prints and Drawings." On view from 3/2. • 104 E. 25th St. (212-254-4710).

Installation

Wrap Artist



New Yorkers know **Kim Sooja** by her haunting video projections *A Needle Woman*, exhibited at P.S. 1 last fall and showing the East Village-based Korean artist standing still, her back to the camera, silently confronting the pedestrian traffic enveloping her on the sidewalks of New York, Cairo, London, Tokyo, Shanghai, and other major cities. In Europe, however, where she has participated in the 1999 Venice Biennale and the Kunsthalle Wien 2002 and had a one-woman exhibition at the Kunsthalle Bern last year, Kim is known for her use of discarded Korean bedcovers, brilliantly colored hand-woven fabrics that she wraps around used clothing to create her own version of the traditional Korean *bottari* (a bundle of one's possessions wrapped in fabric) or displays unmanipulated on floors, tables, or laundry lines. The latter installations, which also involve a kind of wrapping, can now be seen at the Central Park zoo's Leaping Frog Cafe as part of the Whitney Museum's 2002 Biennial (March 7-May 26) and at Peter Blum (99 Wooster Street; through May 18). At Blum, where Kim is showing *A Mirror Woman*, laundry lines hung with bedcovers are reflected in mirrors covering the gallery's walls, so that the entire installation (pictured, with the artist) makes a viewer feel encompassed by the fabrics, an effect that is heightened by gently blowing ceiling fans and a soundtrack of Tibetan monks' chants. Koreans, Kim says, do not always recognize her work as art because it is so closely linked to their everyday life, in which the bedcovers are a traditional wedding present. In a contemporary art space, though, Kim's work has a universal message. "The place of sleeping is the fundamental site," Kim says. "It is where we are born, where we dream, and where we die. Important life stories are happening there." E.N.

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- *Geoffrey Perret*
- *Allan Millett*
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- *John Prados*
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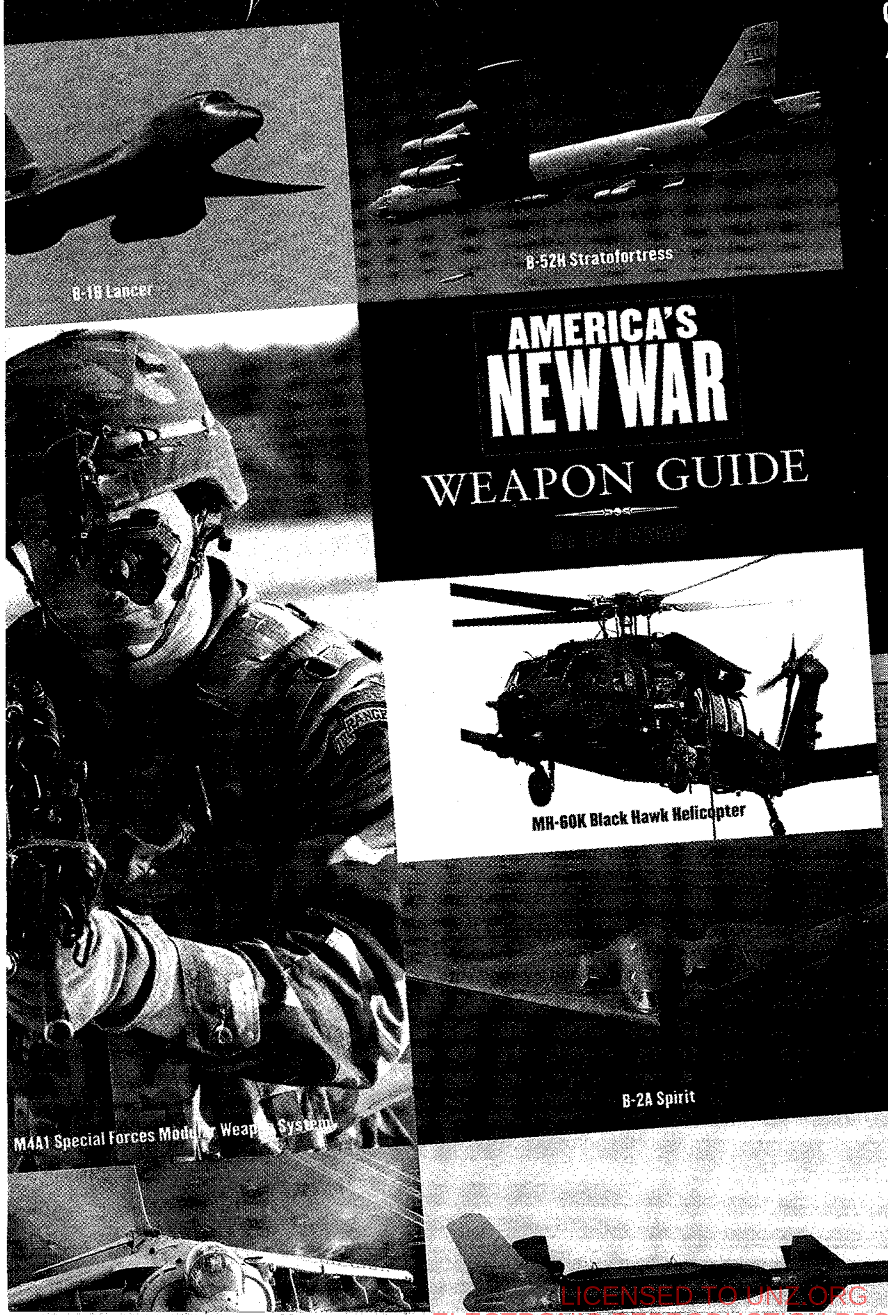
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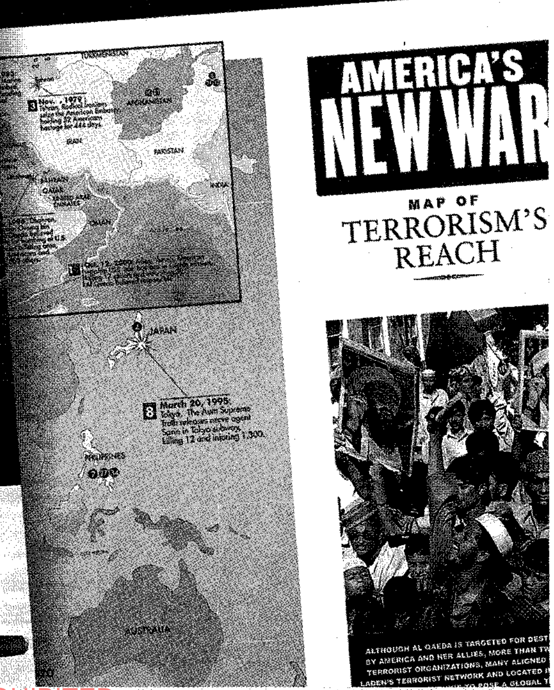
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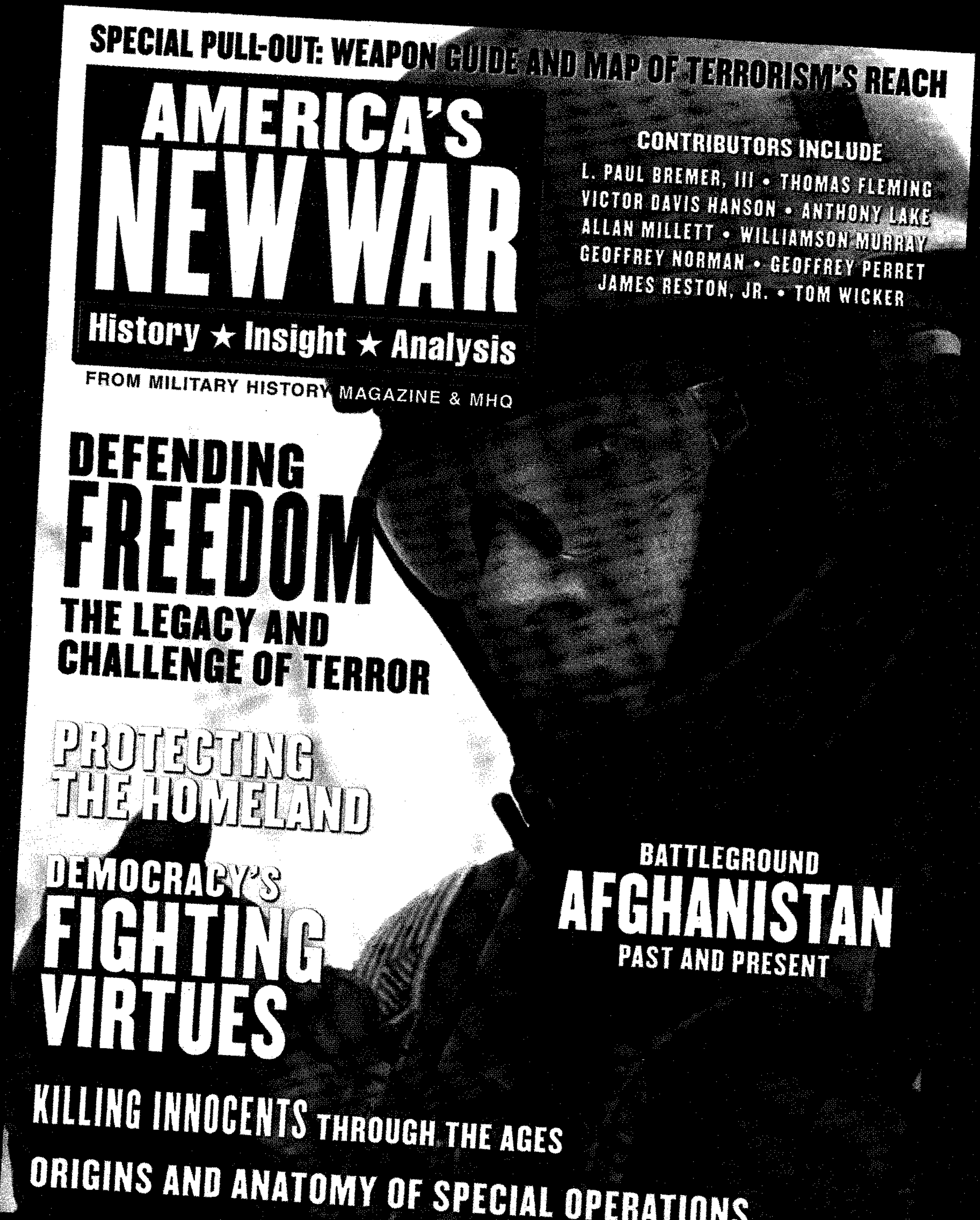

SPECIAL PULL-OUT: WEAPON GUIDE AND MAP OF TERRORISM'S REACH

AMERICA'S NEW WAR

History ★ Insight ★ Analysis

FROM MILITARY HISTORY MAGAZINE & MHQ

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cue

Restaurants

Edited by Robin Raisfeld
& Rob Patronite

New and Noteworthy

BarK
The Cowgirl Hall of Fame is lots of fun, but it's sometimes too rowdy for its own good. Which is why the owners have turned the erstwhile private-party room into a separate 40-seat entity with its own bar and a sophisticated menu of "city western cuisine" like ancho-chili-rubbed rack of lamb, corn-bread-crusted pork tenderloin, and pecan-bourbon crème brûlée. "BarK," pronounced "bar K," refers to the woody décor, not the pet policy. • 255 W. 10th St. (212-633-1133). (I–M)

Beekman Kitchen
From the owners of the China Fun empire comes this American restaurant and takeout shop that makes the most of its wood-fired oven, used for everything from molasses-braised short ribs to clay-pot paella. The menu pays tribute to San Francisco's renowned Zuni Café with a version of its signature herb-roasted chicken with bread salad. Croques monsieurs at lunch, huevos rancheros at brunch—but no dim sum. • 1239 Second Ave., at 65th St. (212-308-0600). (M)

Blue Fin
How can you tell you're in a W hotel? The striking design; the Rande Gerber bar; and the upscale restaurant, like this stylish seafood house at the W Times Square. It's smart. It's handsome. Fiercely noisy with jazz to boot. Chef Paul Sale scores with splendid goat-cheese-and-beet salad, a superior crab cake with celery-root salad, and his precise cooking of fish. And Gotham vet Joseph Murphy's chocolate tasting is too good to just taste. • 1567 Broadway, at 47th St. (212-918-1400). (M–E)

Café Sabarsky
Museum Mile is full of museum cafés, but none quite like this elegant evocation of a Viennese-style kaffeehaus at Ronald Lauder's Neue Galerie New York. The artistic sensibility permeates the café, with its reproductions of Josef Hoffmann sconces, Adolf Loos bentwood chairs, and Otto Wagner fabrics. And the theme continues with tortes (Sacher and Linzer), Bavarian ham for breakfast, and cod strudel for lunch. • 1048 Fifth Ave., at 86th St. (212-288-0665). (M)

Calle Nueve
David Ruggerio has done a steakhouse, a brasserie, several fancy French restaurants, and, most recently, a sushi parlor. The man likes to keep busy. His latest project is Calle Nueve, or "Ninth Street," in the newly renovated Marylou's space. The contemporary-Mexican menu ranges from shrimp seviche with roasted cactus to smoky peanut mole with grilled quail. And, for those who miss the boozy late-night scene at Marylou's, frozen margaritas and "tequinis." • 21 West 9th St. (212-95-0600). (M)

Cast Iron Cafe
This bright, nicely appointed quick-service café on Chelsea's Sixth Avenue shopping strip ups the soup-salad-sandwich ante with its creatively topped "Roman-inspired" pizza, available by the slice and falling stylewise on the New York City pie chart somewhere between the Roman-style slices available at Sullivan Street Bakery and the medium-thick, crispy-bottom Sicilian version at L&B Spumoni Gardens. • 641 Sixth Ave., nr. 19th St. (212-462-2244). (I)

Ground Rules These listings are a selective guide to the city's restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. Stars (★) indicate our critics' recommendations. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive; (M) = moderate; (I) = inexpensive. Restaurants listed accept all major credit cards, except where noted; ($) = cash only; "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted card.

★ Commissary
Matthew Kenney reestablishes his uptown presence with a kitchen that revives some of his signature Mediterranean flavors in dishes like polenta with mascarpone at breakfast (coming soon); panini of prosciutto, pear, blue cheese, and white-truffle honey at lunch; and lamb loin stuffed with goat cheese, mint, dates, and almonds, served with saffron fregula, at dinner. • 1030 Third Ave., at 61st St. (212-339-9955). (E)

★ craftbar
With only three daily entrées—one fish, one meat, and one pasta—craftbar might be Tom Colicchio and chef Marco Canora's laid-back answer to those still anxiety-stricken by Craft's hands-on menu. But before you get around to Tuesday's braised pork belly, Friday's fried flounder, or Saturday's spaghetti carbonara, you'll have to navigate a mouthwatering minefield of Italian-accented appetizers and snacks including risotto balls, salumi, and expertly pressed sandwiches. • 47 E. 19th St. (212-780-0880). (M)

Dias
The point-and-cook Greek seafood concept popularized at Milos, Avra, and Trata has arrived on the Upper West Side, where charcoal-grilled fish, priced per pound, is featured along with the full complement of hot and cold mezedes and Greek salads, plus nightly specials like rabbit stifado and lamb fricassee. There's also a Greek-style Sunday brunch, a kids' menu, and an ouzeria downstairs. • 103 W. 77th St. (212-721-6603). (M)

★ Hadom
The excellent hummus, homemade pita, plus a complementary table full of condiments at this terrific Middle Eastern–Israeli restaurant is a meal in itself. But save yourself for some of the dozen or so other salads and specialties like malawach, the warm, buttery, multilayered fried flatbread; and shakshuksa, poached eggs in a heavenly tomato stew. Weekends the kitchen puts out first-rate renditions of Shabbat dishes like cholent and jachnun. • 137 7th Ave. S. (212-206-7374). (I–M)

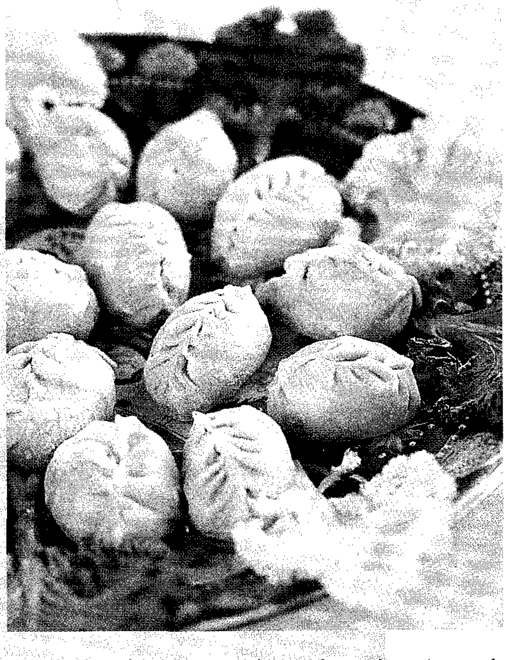
★ The Harrison
With its long, bustling bar, commodious beamy interior, and friendly neighborhood vibe, the Red Cat's Jimmy Bradley and Danny Abrams's new hot spot feels like it's been part of the local landscape for years. There are all sorts of dining options—you can spend a week snarfing the spicy fries—but we like the big dishes best: the crispy chicken served on a fat mattress of scallion mashed potatoes, calf's liver smothered in a sweet sherry sauce, and the house shell steak drizzled with crisps of pancetta. • 355 Greenwich St. (212-274-9310). (M)

Jean-Luc
Ed "Jean-Luc" Kleefield aspired to bring downtown uptown, and he started out by recruiting former Raoul's chef Eric Le Dily, whose menu supplements standards like steak au poivre and lobster bisque with such newfangled notions as bison carpaccio and crab-crusted Chilean sea bass. The room is equally eclectic, mixing brick-red velvet banquettes and Biedermeier chairs with second-century mosaics. Bar menu, too. • 507 Columbus Ave., near 84th St. (212-712-1700). (M–E)

Ask Gael

How far is too far?

By train and by Volvo, my intrepid pals and I converge on Rego Park to sample the cooking of the Bukharan—Central Asian Jews clustered in Queens. Alas, Da Mikelle II, recommended over the phone by a Bukharan bakery, turns out to be—*excuse me?*—an Italian restaurant. "Don't go," the hostess pleads. "The owner will come to cook kebabs for you." But in broken English on the cell, a voice concedes that it's not too late for kebabs at **King David**. We arrive to find a noisy congregation celebrating with speeches, song, and crooning guitar at one huge vibrant table. We order from the lone and abused English menu, pointing for the bewildered waitress while one of our wanderlustful pals fills us in on the culture, from youthful treks to Uzbekistan and Afghanistan. "All the salads will be the same," he warns. And so they are. Tomatoes, more or less. And iceberg. The eggplant never comes. But there is wine. Red or white. Don't ask. The cook clearly favors the rambunctious locals. But finally, platters arrive—lamb and beef and wonderful lulu (ground-beef) kebabs. We've been warned it will be a 45-minute wait for manti (pictured), the meat dumplings we're craving. We wait, but none come. And no apologies: Manti is for the weekends, explains a young man sensing our frustration. "I'll come with you next time," he promises, taking our card. So far, not a word. (101-10 Queens Boulevard, Forest Hills; 718-896-7686.)



PHOTOGRAPH BY CARINA SALVI.

Kai
Downstairs is the Ito En retail shop; upstairs, an elegant restaurant serving food inspired by *kaiseki*, the Japanese meal served after a tea ceremony. And most of the dishes on the à la carte lunch menu and the four-level prix fixe dinner menus ($55 to $110) are flavored with the key ingredient: striped bass roasted with tea leaves, green-tea noodles with tofu, and lobster-salmon-and-grapefruit salad with green-tea vinaigrette. • 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St. (212-988-7277). (E)

★ Marseille
Named for the gritty, industrial port city, this Hell's Kitchen kitchen imbues the Film Center Building with a Casablanca-era French-Moroccan feel, replete with tile floor and zinc bar, but no piano. Chef Alex Ureña, late of Blue Hill, traverses the Mediterranean for stuffed zucchini blossoms, mussel bruschetta, rock-shrimp falafel, and the inevitable bouillabaisse. • 630 Ninth Ave., at 44th St. (212-333-3410). (M)

New Menu

You'll Eat Brunch in This Town Again

Prune's phenomenal new weekend brunch is capable of undoing any residual damage that *Kitchen Confidential*'s notorious chapter on that disparaged meal may have inflicted upon you. It's worth the trip just to read chef-owner Gabrielle Hamilton's truly inspired menu. After you've chosen from nine variations on the Bloody Mary theme (the "Chicago Matchbox" contains homemade lemon vodka, a skewerful of pickled vegetables and caperberries, and comes with a beer chaser) or "Prune juice," a fresh-squeezed blend of Meyer lemon, orange, lime, and grapefruit, you've got an embarrassment of beyond-eggs-Benedict dishes to contend with: a marvelously peppery spaghetti carbonara. A killer Monte Cristo with a side of fried eggs and red-currant jelly. Grilled lamb sausages with Malpeque oysters. And a braised-beef-tongue-and-gremolata omelette. Plus plates that pay tribute to neighborhood institutions, like Joe's Dairy and Russ & Daughters. It's a sunny side of Prune we've never seen before, with light streaming through the French doors, no reservations, and no smoking. (54 East 1st Street; 212-677-6221.)

Meet
With a name that plays on its increasingly trendy location, this onetime meat locker is now inhabited by a D.J. booth, an illuminated catwalk, ostrich-leather banquettes, coconut-wood tables, and, according to consulting master Tin Sun, fine feng shui. Plus a menu that hits all the right contemporary notes, from brandade ravioli to walnut-crusted rack of lamb. Next door, Meet Café features panini, crostini, and pizzette. • 71-73 Gansevoort St. (212-242-0990). (M–E)

Mexico Magico
A huge carved Technicolor calendar, colorful serapes, and faux-paving-stone walls and ceiling inhabit a storefront not much bigger than a postcard. This is a family affair. The food is uneven: watery black-bean soup, fabulous cactus salad, decent guacamole, crunchy flautas. But remarkable mole—wondrously rich and bitter—cloaks a chicken paillard, prices are gentle, and combo plates are colossal. • 438 E. 9th St. (212-477-5522). (I–M) ($)

★ Nam
Nam, with its pale-lemon-and-celadon walls and its illuminated bamboo poles, is a pristine haven just north of the eerie lights of ground zero. Sample wonderful bo bia (soft rice-paper rolls filled with jícama, shrimp, and sweet sausage), luscious shrimp-chicken-and-bean-sprout-filled coconut crêpes, and street-food-inspired thit nuong cuon (lemongrass-beef-and-sesame rice-paper rolls), all lovingly prepared by a trio of talented Vietnamese cooks. • 110 Reade St. (212-267-1777). (I–M)

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NYC
Where there once was Greenwich Cafe, there is now ivory wainscoting, country-quaint cabinets, and—most impressively—Herb Wilson, formerly of Bambou and Jack's Fifth, running the kitchen. Wilson's penchant for Greenmarket-inspired ingredients crops up in a harvest of vegetable sides, from roasted carrots with vanilla butter to pepper-and-mint slaw. And for those insatiable comfort foodies, burgers, steaks, and doughnuts. • 75 Greenwich Ave. (212-366-6004). (M)

ONY
This casual Japanese canteen comes to us via the owners of Menchanko-Tei, the noodle-shop chainlet. Only here, the name stands for "Original Noodle for You," and the focus is on customized ramen. Choose your broth and your toppings, and slurp. Or if that takes too much effort, go with one of the chef's specials, like kimchi menchanko, udon or soba noodles, fried calamari rolls, or Japanese-style fried free-range chicken. • 357 Sixth Ave. (212-414-8429). (I–M)

★ Paradou
There's a feeling of garlic-soaked bonhomie at this cozy bistro à vins named after the bucolic Provençal village of Le Paradou ("paradise" in the local dialect) and dedicated to serving wine-friendly food like ripe cheeses, charcuterie, tartines, crêpes, and hearty rustic pressed sandwiches like the one of duck rillettes, capers, roasted tomatoes, and shallots. In warm weather, a garden with a pétanque court provides extra seating, and behind that, in a delicious bit of Manhattan real-estate irony, lurks Hell (the lounge). • 8 Little W. 12th St. (212-463-8345). (I–M)

Savoia
One bite of the superlative Neapolitan-style crust at this Carroll Gardens pizzeria demonstrates why the tiled, wood-burning pizza oven is the focal point of the warm, rustic room. But because man and woman can't live by bread alone, no matter how tempting the notion, there's also an extensive assortment of well-dressed salads, carpaccio, salumi and cheese, pasta, and mostly southern Italian entrées. • 277 Smith St., Brooklyn (718-797-2727). (M) ($)

Smith
Sardines served in the can says it all. Ditto the "nice ordinary name" (as co-owner Brian McNally puts it) and the nobody's-home whitewashed façade. Happily, chef Kenny Addington (Eight Mile Creek, '44,' Picholine) really knows how to cook and keeps it clean, as in beet-and-blood-orange salad with goat yogurt, crusted lamb shank with parsnip purée, and an elegant Long Island duck roasted rosy pink. • 64 E. 1st St. (212-260-3189). (M)

@SQC
At Avenue, Scott Campbell reacquainted New Yorkers with the often overlooked pleasures of brunch, and now he's brought his rich repertoire of soufflé pancakes, scallion-and-Montrachet scrambled eggs, and pudding-thick hot chocolate thirteen blocks south. Later in the day, there's fragrant stuffed chicken, and an apple tart with caramel and ice cream in three acts that's wondrously good. Ditto frites in parchment. • 270 Columbus Ave., near 72nd St. (212-579-0100). (M)

Suba
With an offbeat menu that melds Spanish and Latin-American flavors, and an aquatic motif involving a pool and an illuminated moat, this Lower East Side restaurant and lounge aspires to make something of a splash. Chef Stéphane Buchholzer goes with the flow, serving a selection of $3 tapas and bigger plates of roasted vegetables with fig jam and saffron crackers, and Cornish hen with steamed mussels and rice croquettes. • 109 Ludlow St. (212-982-5714). (M)

TanDa
Another Park Avenue South restaurant-lounge, this one from a few survivors of the original Moomba, and featuring Hong Kong chef Stanley Wong's Southeast Asian fare. Tan Da was a Vietnamese poet who wrote, "Food and wine are the essence of life." The corresponding significance of lounges and D.J.'s eluded him, but it's a safe bet that the owners of TanDa won't make the same mistake. • 331 Park Avenue S. (212-253-8400). (M–E)

Théo
From Jonathan Morr of BondSt, Republic, and APT fame comes this bistro and lounge, carved out of an unoccupied corner of the gargantuan UPS building in West SoHo. The menu dips into international comfort-food territory with dishes like crab cocktail with avocado salad, veal osso buco with mushroom risotto, and fish stew with pastis and garlic crostini. • 325 Spring St. (212-414-1344). (M)

Tuk Tuk
A tuk tuk is a three-wheeled motorized Thai taxi that looks a little like a golf-cart-size version of Jed Clampett's rickety old ride. The toy model at the door isn't for sale, but the cans of jackfruit and curry paste on the shelves are. And the menu ranges from the familiar (tom yum, larb) to the more obscure (crispy whitefish salad, and a bizarre but tasty American fried rice complete with a couple of mini franks, splayed wide.) • 204 Smith St., nr. Butler St., Brooklyn (718-222-5598). (I–M)

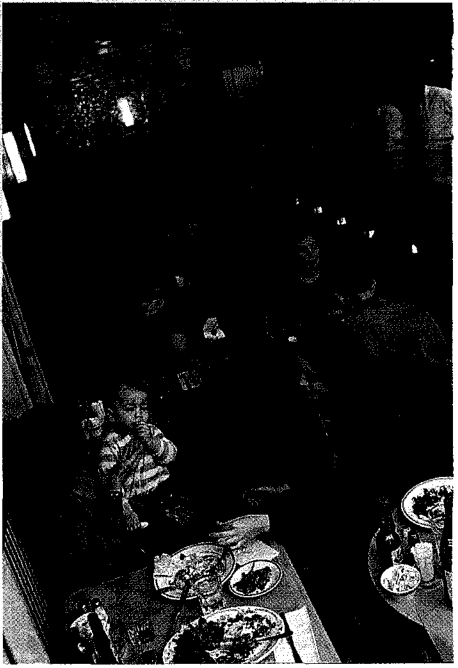
2 West
The restaurant at the new Ritz-Carlton in Battery Park serves playful bento boxes and multiculti noodles at lunch, and a dinner menu full of local vittles like sake-braised Hudson Valley foie gras. The adjacent Lobby Lounge breaks British convention with a "power tea" of steak tartare, foie gras, and Stilton soufflé. And the fourteenth-floor bar, Rise, with its spectacular harbor views, has inherited something of the awe-inspiring spirit of the late Windows on the World. • 2 West St. (212-344-0800). (M–E)

PHOTOGRAPH BY CARINA SALVI.

Opening

Urban Renewalists

"We don't like new," says Williamsburg restaurateur Mark Firth. No kidding. Three years ago, he and partner Andrew Tarlow restored a 1927 Brooklyn diner (now Diner), preserving its quaintly dilapidated ambience while applying a veneer of hipness and—most important—assembling a talented kitchen. Until recently, some of that talent stayed backstage: A Oaxacan brunch cook's soft tacos were the undisputed highlight of staff meals, but never made it on to the menu. They can now be found, along with their creator himself, at **Bonita**, Firth and Tarlow's new cantina, four blocks away. In their trademark preservationist style, they've kept the former Latino lunch counter's sign trumpeting COMIDAS CRIOLLAS, the row of stools opposite the open kitchen, and a few nods to the old menu, like plantains and rotisserie chicken. But cheese-dusted corn on the cob, fish tacos, and chiles rellenos, not to mention soft light flickering off multicolored tiles, set an entirely different tone. (338 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn; 718-384-9500.)



PHOTOGRAPH BY PATRIK RYTIKANGAS.

★ Via Emilia
After playing it safe for years with a greatest-Italian-hits menu, the chef-owner of the former Trattoria i Pagliacci has returned to his Emilia-Romagna culinary roots. The menu features homemade tortellini and tortelloni, a preponderance of balsamic vinegar, and best of all, gnoccho fritto, a basket of puffy fritters served with great cured meats—street-festival fried dough gone to finishing school. • 240 Park Ave. S., nr. 20th St. (212-505-3072). (I–M)

Manhattan

Lower New York

★ AKA Cafe
From the folks at 71 Clinton Fresh Food: Think 'ino meets Ratners, crossed with a little Chicama and a clever small-plates menu with nods toward the neighborhood and its suppliers. A pressed meat-loaf sandwich with red-onion relish and Gus's pickle slices on a Kossar's bialy; oyster soup with Streits's matzo on the side; perfectly flaky braised-pork empanadas—everything artfully presented with a dollop of tomato marmalade here, a dab of salsa rosado there. And nothing over $7. • 49 Clinton St. (212-979-6096). (I)

★ Alfanoose
This spotless falafel joint makes the best—and neatest—falafel sandwich in town. Co-owner Mouhamad Shami meticulously rolls his expertly seasoned falafel and fresh condiments in an unusually thin and pliant pita, like a burrito, so that all the harmonious components merge in every bite. It's also a great source for Middle Eastern appetizers as well as superb lamb or vegetarian kibbeh. • 150 Fulton St. (212-528-4669). (I)

★ Bo Ky
There are 30 soups at Bo-Ky. The best way to order them is by number. Don't read closely to see what's in them. And don't ask. You don't want to know. Whether the meat is pork chop or beef belly or chicken leg, just savor the smells wafting up from those bowls of Chinese, Cambodian and Vietnamese home cooking. It is tremendous soup, in size, flavor, and content. And the prices are pocket change. • 80 Bayard St. (212-406-2292). (I) ($)

★ Bouley
Love him or hate him, there's no denying that the famously obstreperous David Bouley—bouncing between this kitchen and Danube—gets the job done. He's dispensed with the boutique breads, the oven, and the café to make room for lots more seats. And his loyal clientele gratefully lap it up in the ethereal form of degustation menus revolving around superlative seasonal ingredients like skate steamed with fresh chamomile, or organic baby lamb with eggplant moussaka. • 120 W. Broadway (212-964-2525). (E)

★ Bread
The 34-seat café's raison d'être is, as the name says, bread, and all that can be crammed between two slices and deliciously smooshed in a sandwich press. Neighboring Balthazar supplies the crusty building blocks for a dozen or so terrific combinations, like Sicilian sardines with tomato and "Thai-pepper mayonnaise," aged Genoa salami with nutty Taleggio, and rich Italian tuna with lemon dressing. • 20 Spring St. (212-334-1015). (I) ($)

★ Chanterelle
The Waltucks, Karen and David, have specific ideas about how to make an evening unforgettable. The walls are without art. No music. Chairs are huge; plates are, too. The goal is to get you to concentrate solely on who you are with and what you are eating—the stunning juxtapositions of David's quail and star anise, lamb with cumin crust, crabs in ginger, and strawberry millefeuille with elderflower sorbet. • 2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (212-966-6960). (E)

Delmonico's
Eat with the Big Boys at this sprawling, beautifully restored New York City icon. Start the feast the way Diamond Jim would have, with oysters Rockefeller and clams Casino, and end it with baked Alaska; in between there's lobster Newburg, rack of lamb, and, of course, the classic Delmonico's steak. And don't forget your jacket—or your wallet. • 56 Beaver St. (212-509-1144). (E)

★ Honmura An
While the staff doesn't care about your entrance clout at Bungalow 8, it all too obviously plays favorites. Most emphatic, however, is its sanctimoniousness about soba and udon noodles. Still, you won't be disappointed—unless you don't take the menu seriously when it claims that a dish is built around a single giant shrimp. • 170 Mercer St. (212-334-5253). (M–E)

Thom
The new SoHo hotel 60 Thompson has all the boutique accoutrements: interior design by Aero Studio's Thomas O'Brien, uniforms by Nino Cerruti, linens by Frette, and, naturally, its own fashionable restaurant, Thom. Entrées like double-cut lamb chops with peppermint and potato chips, and lobster with fermented black beans, Riesling, taro, and soy beans run $21 to $28—a deal, considering that rooms upstairs start at $370 a night. • 60 Thompson St. (212-219-2000). (E)

Tribeca Grill
Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. • 375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (212-941-3900). (E)

Below 14th Street, East

★ Banjara
In spite of its location amid all those cookie-cutter curry cookers, Banjara is an oasis on Little India's restaurant row. The room and adjoining lounge are cliché-free. And chef Tuhin Dutta's unusual dishes like juicy clay-oven chicken marinated in wine and cream, and dumpakht (think supercolossal Indian potpie) should dispel any worries that the street's mythical underground shared kitchen has taken on a new client. • 97 First Ave. (212-477-5956). (M)

★ Bond Street
The crowd is too cool, the rooms too cozy, the waiters way too pretty. No way is this anywhere you're going to get chirashi worth much more than a can of Bumble Bee. Boy, are you about to be surprised. With food this fresh, original, and vibrantly spiced, the kitchen can easily take on most traditional midtown sushi houses and wouldn't have to walk out of a room backwards if Nobu's troops were in attendance. • 6 Bond St. (212-777-2500). (M–E)

★ Gnocco Caffe
Co-owner Pierluigi Palazzo named this café after the traditional Modenese snack of crispy, puffy fried dough, usually served with prosciutto di Parma. But just to complicate matters, the gently priced menu also offers two versions of gnocchetti (an entirely different, equally delicious thing), plus well-dressed, unusually fresh salads and an unassuming pork tenderloin lavished with Parmesan shavings and an aged-balsamic emulsion. • 337 E. 10th St. (212-677-1913). (I) ($)

★ Il Bagatto
Though so dark the menu can hardly be read and so deliriously energized you'd best be in the mood for a nonvintage bottle of red, Il Bagatto piles on super pastas, salads, and antipasti as full of sharp left hooks as that wine and as cheap as the hangover you'll have tomorrow. • 192 E. 2nd St. (212-228-0977). (I–M)

★ Japonica
Its waiting area is sadistic. Unless you come at six or just before closing, you're probably going to have to hover along that zigzagging ramp. Why do so many bother? Because Japonica's high standards, skilled masters, and huge turnover mean some of the freshest and most varied selection of sushi to be found downtown. • 100 University Pl. (212-243-7752). (M)

★ Jewel Bako
The façade of this tiny East Village jewel box of a restaurant references those forbidding midtown restaurant-cum-clubs with Japanese-only clientele, but the welcome from owner Jack Lamb and his wife, Grace, couldn't be warmer. The snug 24-seat dining room is clad in dramatic bamboo arches that lead back to the six-seat sushi bar, where unsung chef Tatsuya Nagata reigns over a piscatory realm of rarities like Japanese spotted sardines and ark-shell clams. • 239 E. 5th St. (212-979-1012). (M–E)

★ Joe's Pub
Joe's Pub has always served food, but what's come out

of the kitchen has tended to take a backseat to what's onstage. Not anymore. Making an extracurricular field trip from her own nearby kitchen, Il Bagatto, consultant Beatrice Tosti has whipped Joe's kitchen crew into an al dente frenzy. Garlicky tomato crostini, beer-battered frittino misto, and sensational pastas like asparagus tortelloni and spaghetti alla chitarra are all show stealers. Plus there's a recently opened sidewalk café. • 425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8778). (M)

Osso Buco
Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. • 88 University Pl. (212-645-4525). Also, 1662 Third Ave., at 93rd St. (426-5422). (M)

Below 14th Street, West

★ A Salt & Battery
The folks from Tea & Sympathy have expanded their British empire with a fish-and-chips shop that literally reeks of authenticity. Aside from the main attraction, properly wrapped in British newspaper, there are mushy peas, pickled onions, and the improbably edible deep-fried Mars Bars, all deftly executed by a wisecracking fry chef who used to cook in the British Merchant Navy, and then, judging by his hoop earrings, pantaloons, and Errol Flynn beard, must have turned pirate. • 112 Greenwich Ave. (212-691-2713). (I–M)

★ Blue Hill
Despite some culinary trendiness (to wit: a delicious asparagus soup with Parmesan froth), the atmosphere couldn't be more congenial. The room is pretty, too, comfortable and sophisticated, and the three-sided limestone bar accommodates diners and drinkers alike. • 75 Washington Pl. (212-539-1776). (M–E)

Burrito Loco
The house burrito comes with three sauces and a choice of beef, pork, or chicken. There's a rendition stuffed with roasted lamb, another with a chipotle-spiked tomatillo salsa, and lots of vegetarian options. And even though it could probably survive just by serving the hordes of marauding college students nachos and tacos, the festive cantina keeps things interesting with cactus salad and shrimp seviche. • 166 W. 4th St. (212-675-1977). (I–M)

Cafe Alyss
If Cafe Alyss seems like a fish out of water, located among all those late-night Village falafel stands and slice joints, that's only fitting. The specialty here is seafood, creatively prepared from quality ingredients. Try pan-seared dry sea scallops with sweet onion purée, and don't skip dessert. The $9.99 brunch is a particulary good deal, even for cash-strapped NYU students. • 222 Thompson St. (212-387-8239). (M–E)

★ Chow Bar
Chef-partner Peter Klein cooked at China Grill and El Teddy's before settling in the West Village, where he's turning out addictive honey-plum-glazed spareribs, Sichuan steak-frites, and Shanghai lobster noodles. Potent house cocktails fuel a lively crowd, which seems delighted to have found such a fun, quasi-exotic neighborhood place. • 230 W. 4th St. (212-633-2212). (M)

★ Mary's Fish Camp
Here's a tip for anyone who's ever paced up and down Cornelia Street waiting for a vacant stool at Pearl Oyster Bar: Now there are *two* West Village sources for world-class lobster rolls, silken clam chowder, herb-stuffed whole fish, and extended sidewalk pacing. One of Pearl's chef-partners left to open this sunny corner spot equipped with a curved stainless-steel counter and ten tiny tables. • 246 W. 4th St. (646-486-2185). (M)

Monte's
Since 1918, this Village trattoria has weathered the nouvelle-Italian storms and the coming of Mario Batali and continues to serve old-world fare amid cafés that predate Starbucks. All the familiar bases are covered, from pastina en brodo and zuppa di pesce to chicken parmigiana, tortellini alla romana, and on Mondays, osso buco alla Milanese. • 97 Macdougal St. (212-228-9194). (M)

Stonewall Bistro
The legendary bar's sister bistro has a laid-back Parisian feel and a menu with something for everyone, including a Black Angus burger, Chilean sea bass, and hanger steak with wild-mushroom jus, not to mention a $12.95 early-bird prix fixe menu. Veteran piano man Jerry Scott provides the soundtrack. • 113 Seventh Ave. So. (917-661-1335). (M)

Sushi Samba 7
Co-chefs Eiji Takase and Michael Cressotti bring their innovative Latino-Japanese seviches, samba rolls, and sashimi to a Sheridan Square offshoot big enough to handle the caipirinha-fueled overflow from their Gramercy flagship. There's a sunken cocktail lounge, an oyster bar, and a bold new Brazilian accent, especially in the churrasco a' Rio Grande: a feijoada-inspired fantasy of beef, pork, quail, sausage, rice, beans, greens, and farofa. • 87 Seventh Ave. So. (212-691-7885). (M)

Tio Pepe
Can't decide between Mexican and Spanish? This Greenwich Village kitchen has been doling out both for over three decades, and to judge by the liquor supply, the bar's been stocking a new brand of tequila every year. That sort of variety contributes to the general merriment, as do a heaping paella Valenciana and bicultural tapas like garlic shrimp and nachos, which many seem to enjoy in the skylit garden room. • 168 W. 4th St. (212-242-9338). (I–M)

Villa Mosconi
Traditional Northern Italian home cooking in the heart of Greenwich Village. A year-round backyard garden is available for private parties. • 69 MacDougal St. (212-673-0390). (M)

★ Wallsé
Who knew veal goulash could be elegant? Kurt Gutenbrunner's version is an artful mound of tender meat you almost regret toppling. And though dishes like tafelspitz and wiener schnitzel seem like a culinary memoir, the guiding principle here is less goulash than Greenmarket. Local farmers supply Gutenbrunner with lemon thyme for his pike, heirloom tomatoes for his lamb salad, and the sweet strawberries that garnish his elderflower sorbet. • 344 W. 11th St. (212-352-2300). (M–E)

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Andreas Brick Oven Ristorante
Affordable Italian fare in a warm and woody setting. Lobster ravioli, osso buco, and linguine fra diavolo frutti di mare are among several entrées served in individual or family-size portions, and the thin-crust brick-oven pizza comes any way you like. So, practically, do the 20 various versions of martinis. • 307 Third Ave., nr. 23rd St. (212-779-2125). (I–M) ($)

Artisanal
If cheese is a religion, this is its bustling, Balthazar-gone-midtown house of worship. After an olfactory assault at the door, where you're hit with the pungent aroma of Muenster, Taleggio, and 200 other varieties aging gracefully in the boutique cheese cave, indulge in full-fromage festivities from appetizer (raclette pizza) to dessert (a splendid tarte Tatin with a cheese-infused crust.) If you manage to resist a dozen different fondues, there's a full menu of bistro classics like braised lamb shank, boudin blanc, and cassoulet. If not, feed your Appenzeller addiction at the retail cheese counter, which also carries crusty loaves of Balthazar Bakery bread. • 2 Park Ave., at 32nd St. (212-725-8585). (M–E)

Bambou
A hint of the tropics on 14th Street: ambitiously nouvelle renderings of Caribbean cuisine, like crab cakes with avocado and molasses or eggplant soup with coconut and curry amid a relaxing, palm-fronded bar and dining room. • 243 E. 14th St. (212-358-0012). (M)

★ Craft
Tom Colicchio is a chef with a mission, two jobs, and what must be a crackerjack support team. When he's not supervising the three-star kitchen at Gramercy Tavern, he's reducing cooking (or elevating it, depending on your point of view) to its most basic elements, a tactic that works only when the ingredients are of the highest possible quality, procured from small family farms and artisanal producers. At his first solo venture, literally around the corner from Gramercy and similarly elegant, he and his chef de cuisine, Marco Canora, collaborate on a high-concept menu that focuses almost obsessively on raw materials. • 43 E. 19th St. (212-780-0880). (M–E)

Heartland Brewery
A rollicking brewpub with a lively outdoor café. Accompany your choice of microbrew with stout-battered onion rings, a buffalo burger, or sesame-crusted ahi tuna. The beer-weary can sample from the city's largest selection of tequilas and single-malt scotches. • 35 Union Square W. (212-645-3400). Also, 1285 Sixth Ave., at 51st St. (582-8244). (I–M)

★ Mi
Gary Robins (best known for his pan-Asian pyrotechnics at Aja and Match Uptown) has resurfaced at Mi Restaurant and fans of his will recognize signature dishes like Thai grilled-squid salad with chickpeas and green-chili-cilantro oil, and five-spice-crusted breast of duckling. Neophytes who think Asian-fusion is so nineties will find the cooking a revelation. • 66 Madison Ave., nr. 27th St. (212-252-8888). (M–E)

Rodeo Bar & Grill
This place bills itself as "the longest-running honky-tonk in New York," attracting bikers, families, and music-industry insiders. Try the house-smoked baby back ribs, bison burgers, and Santa Fe hand rolls, or just grab a drink at the horse trailer that's been converted into a bar. • 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (212-683-6500). (I)

★ Sahara's Turkish Cuisine
The owners of Sahara Grill, the bare-bones garment-district gyro joint, have branched out with this bona fide restaurant with cushy red velvet window-seat banquettes and a serious kitchen. You can make a meal of the delicious meze along with the freshly baked flatbread that washes up on the table like a puffy, sesame-crusted raft. But then you'd miss out on impressive entrées like iskender kebab and the "special beyti sarma." • 513 Second Ave., nr. 28th St. (212-532-7589). (M)

★ Tabla
It's diminishing to categorize Floyd Cardoz's clean Goan-spiced Maine crab cake or his exquisite pairing of seared foie gras with a black-pepper-and-pear compote as nouvelle Delhi; he's forged a deliriously satisfying union of this country's produce with the strong, heady spices and bewitchingly pungent condiments of his homeland. A less expensive menu at the Bread Bar downstairs aspires to rekindle old taste memories—specifically Cardoz's, including his mom's recipe for beef assad, a.k.a. "Indian pot roast." • 11 Madison Ave. (212-889-0667). (M–E)

★ Union Pacific
A dramatic otherworldly rain-forest setting is a fitting stage for wunderkind turned matinee idol Rocco DiSpirito's wildly inventive, wonderfully weird cooking. Sweet, small scallops nuzzled in their shells by blobs of sea urchin with an essence of tomato, mustard oil, mirin and black mustard. Halibut braised in goose fat with ginger jus and shallot cracklings. Mango and papaya carpaccio with pineapple sherbet and candied cilantro. In less capable hands, mad delusions; in DiSpirito's, pure genius. • 111 E. 22nd St. (212-995-8500). (E)

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

★ Arezzo
An unlikely partnership between the owners of the Gotham Comedy Club and executive chef Margherita Aloi, formerly of Le Madri, Arezzo is nevertheless nothing to joke about. The menu, showcasing Aloi's signature fresh pastas, includes uncommon salads; "focaccina" halved and smeared with Robiola cheese, fresh spinach, and a touch of truffle oil; and a sensational dry-aged rib eye with herb-strewn Tuscan fries and tangy chopped dandelion. • 46 W. 22nd St. (212-206-0555). (M–E)

Arno
Garment District bigwigs and pre-Garden revelers flock to this lively, upscale northern Italian restaurant. Try reliable classics like veal scaloppine and red snapper sautéed with shrimp and clams, garlic, and white wine. • 141 W. 38th St. (212-944-7420). (M–E)

★ City Bakery
Heavenly tarts, perfectly textured cookies and brownies, luscious lemonades, ultra-thick and creamy hot chocolate—even homemade marshmallows—beckon irresistibly from the checkout counter. Pre-dessert,

there are inspired sandwiches like roasted pear and ricotta salata, and the only salad bar we obsess over, plus a breakfast and lunch counter with its own separate menu, and a habit-forming weekend brunch. • 3 W. 18th St. (212-366-1414). (I–M)

Glass
Glass seems to have landed in its industrial no-man's-land location like some kind of high-style UFO, a glowing emissary from a civilization far more advanced than our own. (L.A., maybe?) The small-plate menu offers seviche, panini, a cheese plate, and mixed olives accompanied by some of the skinniest breadsticks around (to match the patrons, we surmise). There's heated competition for the bamboo garden's few plastic ball chairs, the hottest seat since Canteen's nubby orange number. • 287 Tenth Ave., nr. 26th St. (212-904-1580). (I–M)

★ Ilo
Though its neutral, geometric décor may appear too understated to crest the torrential wave of hotel restaurants, Ilo makes the rest of them seem like washouts. Chef-owner Rick Laakkonen's charms and talents are many: a rich lemon-thyme-scented ragout of octopus and Manila clams; pan-roasted rabbit with olives and oregano; grilled quail devilishly grounded by white hominy; and a gloriously simple roasted duck that will make you consider taking up residence at the Bryant Park. • 40 W. 40th St. (212-642-2255). (E)

★ The Park
Were you around during the eighties when places like Mudd Club and Area, and art in the East Village, made New York nightlife feel like the coolest in the world? If you were, then stop watching the reality-based show you're hooked on and go play in the Park, a great sandbox for urbanites who used to be kids but now have some of their own. If you've ever enjoyed the Odeon, you'll get into it. If not, this ain't your playground. • 118 Tenth Ave. (212-352-3313). (M–E)

Slate
Even if pool isn't your game, you might be willing to brave this hall's not exactly tony crowd, giant TVs, and techno throb—not to mention big guys wielding big sticks—for a crack at some delectable comfort food. The big cheese-and-mushroom-stuffed burger alone is worth crossing this cultural divide, and the chewy rare hanger steak is remarkable. • 54 West 21st St. (212-989-0096). (M)

World Yacht Dining Cruises
Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—and sup on a selection from the "Best of New York" menu: featuring dishes based on recipes from the Sea Grill's Ed Brown and Aquavit's Marcus Samuelsson among others. Jacket required. • Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (212-630-8100). (E)

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

★ D'Artagnan, The Rotisserie
After fifteen years of selling foie gras and game to restaurants, D'Artagnan has opened its own: a narrow, high-ceilinged duplex countrified with tiled floors, rough ocher walls, a communal table, and Basque linens. Besides the signature terrines and charcuterie, there's seriously rib-sticking Gascon fare like cassoulet, spit-roasted free-range chicken, and "la garbure et son chabrot," a duck-confit soup dense enough to be eaten with a fork—or drunk in the true Gascon style, directly from the bowl. • 152 E. 46th St. (212-687-0300). (M–E)

Divine Bar
This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can often be found unwinding. • 244 E. 51st St. (212-319-9463). Also, 55 Liberty St., second floor (791-9463). (I–M)

★ Lespinasse
Old-fashioned, luxurious hotel dining is not everyone's idea of fun these days—even with the possibility of a noontime flirtation and posh hotel rooms so handy. But chef Christian Delouvrier's cooking is anything but a bore. His butternut squash soup is revved up with chunks of duck breast and crusty foie gras, lamb rack and loin is touched with Chartreuse and coffee, and baby pig with cassoulet is carefully sauced. With inventive cooking like this, even the recently redone room—so French when it ought to be robber-baron American—seems pleasantly mellowed. • 2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (212-339-6719). (E)

★ Maloney & Porcelli
Maloney & Porcelli claims it isn't a steakhouse, but the tide of pinstripe and hunks of food suggest otherwise. The best meat dish, though, isn't steak but a mammoth "crackling" pork shank—which arrives with a steak knife thrust deep into it—and the service couldn't be nicer. • 37 E. 50th St. (212-750-2233). (E)

★ Michael Jordan's The Steak House N.Y.C.
If you're looking for him, he ain't there. But if you've come for great beef, that's another story. A better slab of New York strip sirloin would be hard to find, no matter which train you board downstairs. And you're surrounded by the spectacular restoration. It's almost as exciting as sitting courtside. • 23 Vanderbilt Ave., Grand Central Terminal (212-655-2300). (E)

Monkey Bar
Many talented chefs have made their way through this kitchen, which, in its latest incarnation under new executive chef David Walzog, is looking back to its all-American roots with entrées like butter-poached Maine lobster, New York strip steak, and seasonal sides like sweet corn succotash and sugar snap peas. David Rockwell's swanky design and the monkey-muraled bar remain unchanged—plush in an Old New York way. • 60 E. 54th St. (212-838-2600). (E)

Nino's Positano
Upscale Italian specializing in food from the south, Positano in particular. Pastas range from the simple (fusilli with tomato-basil sauce) to the more complex (Cognac-infused seafood risotto), and main courses traverse similar territory. • 890 Second Ave., nr. 47th St. (212-355-5540). (M)

One 51
A twenties opera house turned twenty-first-century nightclub, with weekly theme nights like Latin Tuesdays. And should all that dancing make you hungry, the kitchen offers polyglot-American tapas and prix-fixe dinners, incorporating global flavors in everything from "semi-sushi" salmon with wasabi cream and ginger, to slow-roasted duck breast with cantaloupe glaze and polenta. • 151 E. 50th St. (212-753-1144). (M–E)

★ Sushisay
An emergency room is more inviting; everyone's greeted with the same clinical courtesy. Sushi presentation is handsome and precise, but hardly breathtaking. The taste, however, is something else. Sushisay has the cleanest, most seductive sliced raw fish in town. Go with someone who will help you ignore the setting. Or just close your eyes. Your other senses will be doing overtime. • 38 E. 51st St. (212-755-1780). (M–E)

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne
Maybe you're not an out-of-towner on a spending spree, but you can pretend to be at this posh hotel restaurant. Chef Oliver Dudler's modern French menu changes seasonally, and incorporates to-be-expected luxury ingredients like lobster (in a salad with braised mango), foie gras (with beet sorbet), and roasted Colorado rack of lamb. The $50 prix fixe dinner is a (relative) steal. • 700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula (212-903-3918). (M–E)

★ Aquavit
Swedish chef Marcus Samuelsson puts his own uninhibited spin on Scandinavian food, which isn't to say you won't find herring, gravlax, and Swedish meatballs. But for every expected Northern delight there's an innovation like tandoori-smoked char with goat-cheese parfait and Osetra caviar. Those who find the quasi-corporate dining room frosty can warm up with an aquavit or dine upstairs in the café. • 13 W. 54th St. (212-307-7311). (M–E)

★ Baldoria
Everyone at Frank Pellegrino Jr.'s Baldoria toils to make sure customers stay happy enough to sing along with Jimmy Roselli on the jukebox. There's luscious veal scallopini, aromatic spaghetti with clams, a raw bar upstairs, and best of all, 136 seats. So, if you still can't get into Rao's—Junior's father's legendary celebrity hangout—now you don't have to. • 249 W. 49th St. (212-582-0460). (E)

Ben Benson's Steak House
This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. At a time when steakhouses were famous for rudeness and hauteur, Benson's made a point of homeyness. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but there's a weatherproofed "front porch" and a dining room devoted entirely to the assiduous consumption of prime aged beef. • 123 W. 52nd St. (212-581-8888). (E)

Bombay Palace
This newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined tandoori prawns, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri in midtown for years. Try the excellent breads. • 30 W. 52nd St. (212-541-7777). (M)

Cité
Ambassador of beef Alan Stillman cops a French accent at this soaring midtown steakhouse known for its wine dinners. Meat is just the hard core of the menu, a document that also includes pan-roasted salmon "choucroute," grilled chicken merguez sausage, and desserts

Preview

No Nukes

For Italian food's true believers, microwaving lasagna is sacrilege. So at **Barocco Hots**, opening next week, the owners insist on baking and reheating the various meat and vegetable casseroles in the oven. Like all the branches of the popular prepared-foods chain, this new one offers salads, soups, and signature items like chicken potpie. But here, there's table service, pressed panini, and a more extensive menu of made-to-order hot food like pappardelle with green olives and rabbit ragù, spaghetti with red clam sauce, and hanger steak with red-wine reduction. Eventually, there will be breakfast, brunch, and a backyard. *(94 Greenwich Avenue; 212-366-5936.)*

PHOTOGRAPH BY CARINA SALVI.

big enough for two or more to share. For more casual dining, try the Cité Grill next door. • 120 W. 51st St. (212-956-7100). (M–E)

Da Rosina

Those with curtains to make and bellies to fill find just what they're looking for in this Restaurant Row standby, a reliable source for homemade pasta, chicken and veal cutlets every which way, and Italian classics from fried clams to tirami su. A $22 prix fixe dinner and $13.95 lunch make it easy to splurge on affordable indulgences like spicy lobster frutti di mare and broiled sirloin steak. • 342 W. 46th St. (212-977-7373). (M)

★ DB Bistro Moderne

Daniel Boulud's latest venture is supposed to be an homage to the simple bistro foods of his youth, but the great chef can't help making things fancy. Take boeuf en gelee, which Chef Boulud coats with sweet horseradish cream and serves in a dainty parfait glass. Or the $27 "DB Burger," leavened with foie gras and short ribs and a silver cup of pommes soufflés on the side. The space can feel a little hectic around theater time, but elbow your way in if you can. • 55 W. 44th St. (212-391-2400). (E)

★ Del Frisco's

Want to see what mahogany fashioned by testosterone looks like? This is without question the most urbane steakhouse you will ever see, its meat locker filled with terrific beef. From the usually overrated filet mignon, whose buttery blandness gets surmounted by a brash pepper-splattered crust, to the superb 26-ounce "double eagle" strip, Del Frisco's is a silverware-clanking crowd pleaser. • 1221 Sixth Ave., at 49th St. (212-575-5129). (E)

Heartland Brewery & Chop House

With hefty hunks of prime aged beef, braised buffalo short ribs, and lobster-and-crab-stuffed ravioli—not to mention a superb artisanal-cheese-and-beer tasting plate—this third branch of the popular brewpub chain is clearly the most culinarily ambitious. But the mood is still mellow, especially at the bar, a rare, comfortable Times Square spot to toss back some of the terrific hand-crafted brews. • 127 W. 43rd St. (646-366-0235). (M–E)

★ Island Burgers and Shakes

This Hell's Kitchen storefront with a Southern California vibe specializes in burgers and chicken sandwiches, or churascos, in countless combinations. A blackened churasco is a couple of degrees of Cajun heat short of a call to Jacoby & Meyers, and needs only minor embellishment like blue cheese, or avocado and Monterey jack. Be sure to order yours on Sullivan Street Bakery ciabatta, and douse the flames with a malted. • 766 Ninth Ave., nr. 51st St. (212-307-7394). (I) ($)

★ Le Bernardin

Criticizing Le Bernardin is like analyzing rainbows. Just try to describe the snapper in coconut milk or the black bass with truffles and celery root. Submit to the sorcery of chef Eric Ripert, the bewitchery of owner and co-creator Maguy Le Coze, and experience the thrilling sensation of having everything perfect. • 155 W. 51st St. (212-489-1515). (E)

Martini's

Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing sidewalk café and rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. • 810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (212-767-1717). (M)

Oona's Restaurant & Bar

Casual, contemporary American fare in an up-and-coming neighborhood. Creative renditions of seared red snapper, ginger-glazed with bok choy and pickled beets; breast of duck with butternut squash and duck confit; and pizza garnished with figs, mascarpone, and prosciutto. Plus apple martinis and sidewalk dining, weather permitting. • 891 Eighth Ave. at 53rd St. (212-956-6000). (M)

★ Town

A delightful sensation takes over the moment you descend into Town—that all too infrequent feeling when you know you're going to be glad you came. From a front desk actually focused on you to a room aglow in plush, sleek romanticism, Town revels in being all grown up. But the real forte is chef-owner Geoffrey Zakarian, who prepares subtle, sophisticated dishes like tuna in ramp-and-sea-urchin sauce, and duck steak with buckwheat pilaf. • 15 W. 56th St. (212-582-4445). (M–E)

Zanzibar

The crowd at this loungey Hell's Kitchen restaurant is as eclectic as the menu. African, Arabic, Asian, and Mediterranean touches appear in dishes like tuna and ginger ravioli; mussel soup with garlic, chickpeas, and cilantro; and a root vegetable and peanut stew served over rice. • 645 Ninth Ave, nr. 45th St. (212-957-9197). (M)

57th–60th Streets

★ Alain Ducasse at the Essex House

The epitome of posh, from the decorous welcome to the postprandial lollipop cart, Ducasse's American outpost has found its groove. And even if a $160 dinner doesn't become a weekly habit, the extravagantly Art Deco cocoon of a room should be experienced at least once, as should the obsessively seasonal menus, the cheese course, and the high-concept wine list. The twice-weekly $65 lunch is, relatively speaking, a steal. • 155 W. 58th St. (212-265-7300). (E)

Caviarteria

If you like to sip Taittinger and nibble caviar by the eighth of an ounce on a whim, this is the place for you. The casually elegant café also offers sampler platters of Sevruga, Osetra, and Beluga, plus related luxuries like a black-truffle soup, smoked trout from Idaho, salmon from Scotland, and a host of roe-centric sandwiches. • 502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (212-759-7410). (M–E)

The Manhattan Ocean Club

Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics. A pictorial menu features a dozen or so smiley-faced fish. Preparations range from classic (Dover sole meunière) to creative (grouper with roasted pineapple and black peppercorns). Or have the chef prepare your fish any way you like. • 57 W. 58th St. (212-371-7777). (E)

ONEc.p.s.

Alan Stillman, along with executive chef David Burke and designer Adam Tihany, has rewired the Plaza's Edwardian Room. Tihany has colored the oaken walls caramel and put huge scarlet lampshades on the chandeliers, and the irrepressible Burke has concocted a whimsical menu that includes a foie gras–spiked burger and a rack of lamb accompanied by shepherd's pie. The mosaic floors and ceiling remain untouched, and the view of Central Park is as grand as ever. • 1 Central Pk. So. (212-583-1111). (E)

Rue 57

The burgundy-and-brass-bistro-by-the-numbers rooms don't lead you to expect much, but chef Sam Hazen has turned what used to be the dreariest corner on 57th Street into a boisterously attractive destination with quirkily superb dishes like mission fig turnovers with Parma ham and duck crumble. Unlike Pastis, it won't remind you of Paris. But when was the last time you ate this well around the corner from Bergdorf Goodman? • 60 W. 57th St. (212-307-5656). (M)

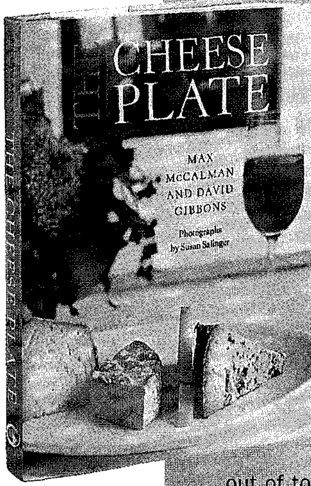
★ Shelly's New York

The latest Shelly Fireman production inhabits an old Automat space, ergo the "Horn & Hardart" creamed spinach and macaroni and cheese. Only the assimilative Fireman (of Brooklyn Diner fame) would offer towering shellfish platters and stone crabs flown in daily from Joe's in Miami Beach alongside miso-glazed halibut, chicken schnitzel, and a 50-ounce porterhouse steak cooked "Brooklyn style" and make it all work. • 104 W. 57th St. (212-245-2422). (M–E)

Tao Asian Bistro

The team behind Rue 57 has transformed the old Palace movie house into a place where the indecisive can share spicy lobster roll with black caviar, Shanghai-style soup dumplings, $10-an-ounce Kobe beef with wasabi, and Peking duck. Book the "sky box," a private room where the projectionist's booth used to be, and gaze down on the sixteen-foot Buddha, keeping the peace. • 42 E. 58th St. (212-888-2288). (M)

IN PRINT



In the old dairy days, Kraft and Laughing Cow ruled the supermarket cheese shelf, and "Parmesan" came in a canister. Now, with the burgeoning appetite for handcrafted farmhouse cheeses, we need an expert to guide us through the stinky spectrum of spoiled milk. Who better than Max McCalman, maître fromager at Picholine and Artisanal and outspoken raw-milk advocate? In **The Cheese Plate** (Clarkson Potter; $32.50), McCalman reveals how to buy ("If a taste isn't offered, ask for one. If it's refused, leave"), store (when too cold, cheeses are "not dead, they're not ruined, but they're not 100 percent happy"), and taste ("We are a culture that is out of touch with its nose!"). Most helpfully, he assembles plates for every season, wine, and meal, including breakfast. And to dispel the notion that his is a life of glamour and gluttony, he guides us through a typical day, from "reading about cheeses as I ride the subway" to his nightly "six hours of unbroken cheese service."

Above 60th Street, East Side

★ Atlantic Grill

This place is as Upper East Side as a jitney ride to Wainscott. Yet it also has a try-anything-once attitude toward seafood: Hey, buddy, we got a pan-Asian sushi bar, a wood-burning grill, a big lobster pot. Tell us what you want, and it's yours. On an avenue where the restaurants are as hard to tell apart as the clientele's khakis, Atlantic Grill's adroitness is more than a drop in the ocean. • 1341 Third Ave., nr. 76th St. (212-988-9200). (M)

★ The Bar @ Etats-Unis

This might be the Upper East Side's best gourmet bargain. And considering it's only got 24 seats—seven of them bar stools—the joint's low profile is a blessing. The bar shares an impressive cellar with Etats-Unis, its sister restaurant across the street, whence comes some of the hearty fare like a seriously satisfying beef stew. For a lighter bite, you can't go wrong with farmhouse cheeses and charcuterie paired with one of the terrific by-the-glass selections. • 247 E. 81st St. (212-396-9928). (M)

The Boathouse in Central Park

Claim a table by a flowery umbrella on the pondside deck and give thanks to Frederick Olmsted and generations of park champions for preserving this precious greenery. The American menu leans toward fresh seafood like pan-roasted monkfish with spring onions and garlic confit, and seared wild striped bass. • E. 72nd St. and Park Drive N. (212-517-2233). (M–E)

★ Cello

Every appointment (Bernaudaud dishes, monochromatic flowers, and almost reflective mahogany walls) serves as an elegant yet unobtrusive backdrop for the whisper-light delicacies that emerge from chef Laurent Tourondel's kitchen. Rougets glistening like bloodstones in a raw tomato sauce. Turbot that melts like cot-

PHOTOGRAPH BY DASHA WRIGHT EWING.

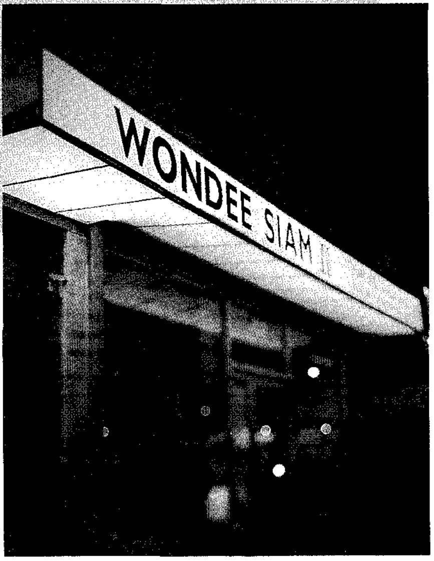
ton candy. Lamb as velvety as foie gras. And frozen crème brûleé that must have the Häagen-Dazs people turning like dervishes. • 53 E. 77th St. (212-517-1200). (E)

★ Fred's at Barneys New York
Normally, the stuff served in department-store eateries is the gastronomic equivalent of the final clearance bin. Not so here. The menu's an amalgam of au courant Italian (lovely pasta), guilt-ridden dietetic (chicken soup rendered fatless), and size-6-be-damned deli (chicken livers and pot roast to plotz from). The airy new ninth-floor location features a serpentine granite bar, leather chairs, and, unlike the old subterranean space, windows. • 660 Madison Ave., nr. 61st St. (212-833-2200). (M-E)

Opening

Wondee Bred

Given that there are no fewer than six Thai restaurants on the Hell's Kitchen blocks between 49th Street and 53rd Street, we're unofficially calling this neighborhood Little Bangkok. The latest addition, **Wondee Siam II**, pushes the boundary a little farther north. Named in classic Mulberry Street fashion after the first tiny Wondee Siam takeout joint, which resides across the avenue and is bathed in enough fluorescent wattage to light Shea Stadium, Siam II is a relatively posh and low-lit spin-off with 45 seats, linen napkins, a rose on every table, and an expanded menu of tangy, fiery salads like laab gai (minced chicken with red onion, scallions, chilis, and lime juice), crispy-duck salad with cashews and pineapple, and well-balanced curries from subtly spiced to fierce—the sort of thing food snobs refer to as "good for New York" Thai. (813 Ninth Avenue, near 53rd Street; 917-286-1726.)



Mo's Caribbean
Pack your bags, sweetie; we're going to the islands. Close enough. This spot with an MTV beach party vibe serves Caribbean and Mexican-American fare like jerked chicken, coconut shrimp, and fajitas—all in a dining room with real palm trees and reggae music. Reserve for Monday's Lobster Madness night. Leave with a suntan. • 1454 Second Ave., at 76th St. (212-650-0561). (M)

Nino's
Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. • 1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-988-0002). (E)

Pamir
Worth a trip for the coziness of tribal carpets, the hanging copper and saddle bags, the warm welcome, and the luscious ravioli-like aushak under a mantle of yogurt and savory meat sauce. Satiny eggplant and pumpkin are similarly draped. Chunks of juicy lamb shore up the pistachio-and-almond-tossed pilaf (called palaw). And the baklava (baghlawa) is chewy and not too sweet. • 1437 Second Ave., nr. 74th St. (212-734-3791). (M)

★ Park Avenue Cafe
A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the neighbors rapt with signature dishes like salmon pastrami with crushed pepper. • 100 E. 63rd St. (212-644-1900). (E)

★ The Post House
How grand can a steakhouse get? If you took a meat-and-potatoes guy who liked to hang out at the Art Student's League, gave him a few years at Princeton, and financed his *Wanderjahr* abroad, he might come home and open the Post House. It's clubby but not snooty, with a Christo here and a Twombly there, and a well-traveled menu that includes everything from a Cajun rib steak to venison osso buco. • 28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (212-935-2888). (E)

Sel & Poivre
Stanching the flow downtown for bistro fare. Regulars find what they are looking for in this quaint, countrified space. The country-French cuisine includes steak au poivre, bouillabaisse, and roasted chicken, and the prix fixe menus are a bargain. • 853 Lexington Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-517-5780). (M)

Above 60th Street, West Side

★ A
Mom-and-pop partners Marc Solomon and Blue Grant have infused a bleak stretch of upper Columbus with downtown flavor and a mellow neighborly vibe. Solomon uses what might be the city's tiniest professional kitchen to maximum effect, turning out simple, inventive Jamaican-inspired French dishes like curried lamb pie with coconut crème fraîche and jerk duck-leg confit. • 947 Columbus Ave., nr. 106th St. (212-531-1643). (I)

Alibaba
A twelve-seat glatt kosher restaurant and takeout shop specializing in Yemenite-Israeli cuisine—with a macrobiotic twist. Owner Moshe Harizy imports spices, fava beans, and fruit nectars from Israel and bakes his own lafah, the flatbread that makes his turkey shawarma something special. • 515 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 85th St. (212-787-6008). (I)

Corner
A nicely appointed neighborhood restaurant as inviting as its name and the warm glow from its copper sconces. Chef Maurice Hurley's pleasing, something-for-everyone menu includes grilled smoked sausage, Atlantic salmon, and Vietnamese tuna with red cabbage and shiitake mushrooms. • 461 Columbus Ave., at 82nd St. (212-875-1619). (M)

Jimmy's Uptown
Jimmy Rodriguez's new joint brings a little bit of SoHo to Harlem. The former residential space on Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard has been decorated with half-moon leather banquettes and luminous Lycra lamps. There is foie gras on the menu (served atop sweet calabaza squash); filet mignon with horseradish-flavored grits; and plump, pecan-crusted catfish fillets. Some of the culinary experiments are more successful than others, but the scene—and the Glory Glory Hallelujah $25 Sunday brunch—are worth the trip. • 2207 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd. (212-491-4000). (E)

★ Nick & Toni's Café
This spinoff of the East Hampton classic is literally a hot spot, with flavorful Mediterranean food popping and sizzling in the wood-burning oven. Ingredients are top-notch, wines well selected, and the oven-roasted chops and whole fish consistently satisfying. Pizza night on Sunday gives John's a run for its thin-crust money. • 100 W. 67th St. (212-496-4000). (M-E)

★ Ouest
After cultivating a coterie of foodie followers at places like Alison on Dominick and Cascabel, Tom Valenti brings his distinctive style of boldly layered flavors—and those lamb shanks—to a neighborhood legendarily short on sophisticated grub. Clearly, he's doing his darnedest to turn the tide with reprises of old favorites like potato, goat cheese, and truffle terrine with transcendent beets; and lusty short rib on an ooze of polenta perfumed with smoked onions. • 2315 Broadway, near 84th St. (212-580-8700). (M-E)

Restaurant 222
Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse, Frank Valenza's top-rated New American West Sider is a luxurious surprise in a neighborhood nearly bereft of them. The menu is full of high-ticket items like Beluga caviar, Kobe steak, truffles, and foie gras, which makes the $29.95 pretheater dinner, available from 5 to 6:30, a great deal. • 222 W. 79th St. (212-799-0400). (E)

Scaletta
A dining room decorated in muted blues and pinks is the tranquil setting for refined Northern Italian fare, from smoked salmon and beef carpaccio to a selection of risotto and veal dishes. Conveniently located across the street from those famous dinosaurs at the Museum of Natural History. • 50 W. 77th St. (212-769-9191). (M)

Sugar Hill Bistro
The most exciting addition to the Harlem restaurant scene since Hillary's husband. This beautifully restored brownstone has a ground-floor bar and jazz lounge and a second-floor dining room where Atlanta chef Adam D. Elliott gutsily ducks soul-food stereotypes. Chicken-and-spinach spring rolls, Moroccan-spiced shrimp cocktail, and Asian-pan-seared scallops are as much an incentive to book a table as the prospect of the former First Saxophonist swinging by. • 458 W. 145th St. (212-491-5505). (M-E)

Brooklyn

Long Tan
A sprawling, minimalist-chic Thai restaurant and lounge with a snug garden, house-infused cocktails, an intriguing Australian wine list, and a kitchen that challenges nearby Blue Ribbon's late-night supremacy, serving till 2 a.m. Chef Jeff Hardinger, late of Ruby Foo's, turns out lively, gently priced renditions of shrimp-and-litchi spring rolls, rice-and-garlic sausages, vegetarian jungle curry, and grilled-kangaroo salad—which we'd imagine goes splendidly with a glass of Tasmanian pinot noir. • 196 Fifth Ave., nr. Union Street (718-622-8444). (I-M)

Queens

Tibetan Yak
Uma Thurman and Richard Gere have yet to make an appearance, but the Free Tibet contingent would feel right at home here with the Dalai Lama playing continuously on video. Dumpling connoisseurs will like the momo, the Tibetan take on potstickers served with a sesame-dressed cabbage salad, or la ping, two mung bean cakes drizzled with spicy chile-soy sauce. And the influences of China and India emerge in dishes like chow mein and shogok khatsa, spicy potatoes served, in a double carbo whammy, with steamed rolls. • 72-20 Roosevelt Ave., Jackson Heights (718-779-1119). (I)

PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNETH CHEN.

Classical & Dance

Edited by Alicia Zuckerman

Classical Music

"Aranjuez Guitar Series"
Stephen Marchionda plays Ernesto Cordero's homage to Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico, *Suite Antillana;* Nicholas Maw's new work drawn from variations on Mendelssohn's *Intermezzo;* and works by Ponce, Beaser, and José. 3/9 at 8:30. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $20.

DaCapo Chamber Players
"My Twentieth Century" program is named after the evening's world premiere by Martin Bresnick. Also, piano quintets by Judith Weir and Iannis Xenakis, and Michael Gordon's rock-influenced *ACDC.* 3/4 at 8. • Miller Theatre, Columbia University, 116th St. at Broadway (212-854-7799); $15.

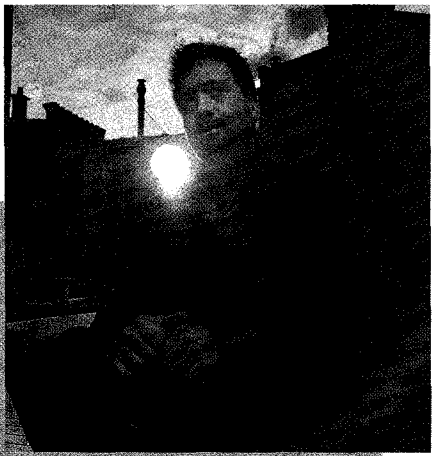
★ eighth blackbird
Contemporary music sextet makes its Lincoln Center debut with Aaron Jay Kernis's *The Four Seasons of Futurist Cuisine*, based on a 1920s Italian Futurist manifesto and narrated by celebrity chef Mario Batali. 3/5 at 8. • Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $30.

★ New York Philharmonic
Paul Daniel conducts Debussy's *Danses Sacrée et Profane*, Beethoven's Symphony No. 2, and Berlioz's *Les Nuits d'Été*. See box. 3/6–3/8 at 8. • Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $21–$82.

★ "Electronic X-Travaganza"
Festival of electronic music features David Behrman, Douce, Holland Hopson, Christine Bard/Jim Pugliese ELX, and more. 3/7–3/9 at 8. • The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. (212-255-5793, ext. 11); $12. (two nights: $20; three nights: $25).

Talent

High Hopes



Until 1992, **David Daniels** was a frustrated tenor ("That would be an understatement," he says), parking cars and delivering singing telegrams in Cincinnati, where he was in conservatory. Then, at 26, the South Carolina native finally gave a recital as a countertenor—a male who sings in the alto range—and the change has made all the difference in his fabulous career. Over the past few decades, Baroque music has seen a big comeback, giving countertenors plenty to sink their teeth, or at least their vocal cords, into. Though Daniels has been a part of the trend (and a critics' favorite), he also likes to break out, with nineteenth- and twentieth-century repertoire. This week, with the New York Philharmonic, he'll sing Berlioz's strenuous *Les Nuits d'Été*, a song cycle more often performed by mezzo-sopranos. "It's a monumentally large piece, and I don't have a large voice," he says. "I have a well-placed voice. I approach these songs as if they were art songs." (See "Classical.") A.Z.

★ St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra
"Focus On: Rachmaninoff" series continues with the Piano Concerto No. 3 featuring Yuri Bronfman on 3/7, Piano Concerto No. 1 with Leif Ove Andsnes on 3/8, and Piano Concerto No. 2 with Dmitri Alexeev on 3/9. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $24–$102.

★ "Composer Portraits: György Ligeti"
Alarm Will Sound performs three concertos by the contemporary Hungarian composer. 3/8 at 8. • Miller Theatre, Columbia University, 116th St. at Broadway (212-854-7799); $20.

Jerusalem Quartet
Ensemble of twentysomethings perform quartets by Haydn, Shostakovich, and Beethoven. 3/9 at 8. • 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-415-5500); $35.

Musicians From Marlboro
Touring extension of the renowned Vermont summer festival performs chamber music by Beethoven, Hindemith, and Fauré. 3/9 at 8, Washington Irving High School; 3/10 at 2, New School. • Washington Irving High School, 16th St. and Irving Pl. (212-581-5197); $7.50. The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (243-9937); $14.

American Composers Orchestra
Steven Sloane, who'll replace director Dennis Russell Davies next season, conducts a world premiere by Stewart Wallace with art-rock group Icebreaker, and an Erich Korngold symphony. 3/10 at 3. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $17–$47.

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center
Conductor-violinist Joseph Silverstein celebrates his 70th birthday, performing Bartók's Sonata for Solo Violin and music by Schubert and Mozart. 3/10 at 5 and 3/12 at 7:30. • Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $27.50–$37.50.

★ James Galway, Flute
Legendary French flutist performs works by Franck, Saint-Saëns, Debussy, and New York–based composer Gary Schocker, with accompanist Phillip Moll. 3/10 at 3. • Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $27–$47.

★ Anne Sofie Von Otter, Mezzo-Soprano
Half the recital is dedicated to Swedish composers Algot Haquinius, Tor Aulin, Ture Rangström, and Gösta Nystroem. The other half offers more traditional fare: Schubert and Weill. 3/10 at 2. • Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $47.

The Raphael Trio
Premieres works by Edward Cohen, Wolfgang Florey, Dan Dediu, and Frederic Rzewski. A Mendelssohn trio rounds out the night. 3/12 at 8. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-787-0993); $20.

★ Richard Tucker Music Foundation
Free concert features opera stars: baritones Bryn Terfel and Juan Pons, mezzos Denyce Graves and Suzanne Mentzer, sopranos Hei-Kyung Hong and Maria Guleghina, and tenors Marcello Alvarez and 2000 Tucker Award winner Gregory Turay. 3/12 at 6:30. • Temple Emanu-El, Fifth Ave. at 65th St. (212-744-1400); free.

Opera

★ Metropolitan Opera
Parade, with music by Satie, Poulenc, and Ravel and inspired by Cocteau, Apollinaire, and Colette, premieres 3/4. *War and Peace*, *Rigoletto*, and *Tosca* run, too. Call for details, or visit www.metopera.org. • Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (212-362-6000); $25–$265.

★ Amato Opera
Last weekend of Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*, 3/8–3/9 at 8:30 and 3/10 at 2:30. • Amato Opera, 319 Bowery (212-228-8200); $28.

★ New York City Opera
The Gershwins's *Porgy and Bess* is up this week. Mozart's *Don Giovanni* opens 3/10. Call for details, or visit www.nycopera.com. • New York State Theater, Lincoln Center, (212-870-5570); $25–$98.

Dance

Donald Byrd/The Group
Presents a decade's worth of dance by Bessie Award–winning choreographer Byrd, with illusions from magician Steve Cuiffo. Highlights are *Jazz Train; Not the Shack*, a satirical take on social dancing; and *Drastic Cuts*, about the state of art in the U.S. 3/4–3/17. Call for details. • New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200); $10–$30.

★ Paul Taylor Dance Company
Highlights include the Depression-inspired *Black Tuesday*, premiered at the American Ballet Theater last year; *Antique Valentine,* a witty look at love and marriage set to music-box Bach, Beethoven, and Chopin; and other repertoire spanning five decades. 3/4–3/10. Call for details. • City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212); $30–$60.

★ Seán Curran Company
92nd Street Y Harkness Dance Project continues with premieres of *Sonata*, for eight dancers set to Janacek, and a full-company work set to the Scottish eighties band Young Marble Giants; also, *Irish Laments*, a suite of solos set to Irish instruments. 3/6–3/7 and 3/9 at 8; 3/10 at 3. • The Duke on 42nd St., 229 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200); $20.

New York Baroque Dance Company
Celebrates its twenty-fifth season with *Anniversary Baroque Costume Ball*, complete with period costume, masks, puppets, and live music. Audience participation encouraged. 3/7–3/10 at 8:30. • St. Mark's Church, Second Ave. at 10th St. (212-674-8194); $15.

Ganjiro Nakamura III
Kabuki dancer performs the Japanese classic *Fuji Musume* (The Wisteria Maiden) as an *onnagata* (a female impersonator). 3/7 at 8. • Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (212-752-3015); $30.

"Love After Death"
Choreographer Julia Ritter, writer Michael Duke, and composer Michael Wall collaborated on a work, inspired by roadside shrines, about different human reactions to loss and the way we memorialize loved ones. 3/8–3/9 and 3/15–3/16 at 8. • University Settlement, 184 Eldridge St. (212-924-0077); $12.

Ground Rules This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. Stars (★) indicate our editors' recommendations. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

PHOTOGRAPH BY BERNARD BENANT.

cue

Nightlife

Edited by Ethan Brown

Concerts

Finbar Wright
3/9 at 8. The Irishman behind sentimental hits like "Lift the Wings" and "I Give My Heart." • The Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (212-307-7171). $30–$40.

Ratdog
3/9 at 8. Ex-Dead guitarist Bob Weir's long-running side project. Expect Dead tunes like "The Music Never Stopped" to satisfy the faithful. • Hammerstein Ballroom, 311 W. 34th St. (212-307-7171). $28.

★ "70s Soul Jam"
3/9 at 7:30. With the Stylistics; Chi-Lites; Delfonics; Cuba Gooding Sr. and the Main Ingredient; the Persuaders; the Intruders. A nice bill of seventies-era sensitive soulsters. Make sure to bring your copy of *Hey Love: The Classic Sounds of Sexy Soul* for guidance. • Beacon Theater, 2124 Broadway, at 74th St. (212-307-7171). $37–$52.

Performance

Dead Heads

The Austin, Texas, foursome **. . . And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead** (pictured) might have one of the more intriguing band names to come along in a while, but don't ask its members about that. "You want *me* to explain it?" asks guitarist Conrad Keely incredulously. "I'd rather not, because I don't think you should read too much into it." When pressed, Keely points to Greil Marcus's book *Lipstick Traces* and its "take on punk rock as a continuation of antiestablishmentarianism" as a primary influence. That might not clarify matters much, but no matter: . . . And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead makes beautiful, almost epic noise (think Sonic Youth's "Expressway to Yr. Skull"). And you have to appreciate a band that can record for a major label and drop references to Marcus and to situationist theorist Guy Debord into its press bio. What's more, the band was signed by Interscope honcho Jimmy Iovine himself, the legend responsible for breaking Eminem and Dr. Dre. "We come from the school of the mistrusting DIY punk, so we have no idea if it was a good idea to sign to a major," Keely says. "But we figured that after nearly a decade of middle-of-the-road alternative music and terrible pop, we might as well step up." . . . And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead plays Bowery Ballroom March 11 and 12. E.B.

Small Stages

B.B. King Blues Club & Grill
3/5: Leif Garrett. 3/6: The W.C. Handy All-Stars. 3/7: Strawberry Fields: A Tribute to the Beatles. 3/8–3/9: Rick James. 3/10: "Black 2 Broadway" with Savion Glover. 3/11–3/12: Chic with Nile Rodgers. • 243 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144).

Bottom Line
3/7: The Weimar Band. 3/9: Neshama Carlebach. • 15 W. 4th St. (212-228-6300).

Bowery Ballroom
3/5: Bob Schneider; Mike Errico. 3/6: South; Elbow. 3/7–3/8: Great Big Sea. 3/11–3/12: . . . And You Will Know Us by the Trail of the Dead. • 6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111).

Fez
Thursdays: Mingus Big Band. 3/8: Regina Spektor; David Poe. 3/9: Julianna Nash; Mary Lorson. 3/10: Joan Rivers. 3/12: Joan Rivers. • Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).

Irving Plaza
3/5: Starsailor. 3/6–3/7: Tesla. 3/8: Cracker. 3/9: The Samples; Jumper. 3/11: Nile Rodgers and Chic. 3/12: Five for Fighting. • 17 Irving Pl. (212-777-6800).

Joe's Pub
3/5: Bill Frissell. 3/6: Norah Jones; Chocolate Genius; Louie Austen. 3/7: Angélique Kidjo. 3/8–3/9: Cy Coleman. 3/10 and 3/12: Cui Jian. • 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Knitting Factory
3/5: Lambchop. 3/6–3/7: Pinback. 3/8: Karate. 3/9: Heroine Sheiks. 3/10: Jacob Fred Jazz Odyssey. 3/11: March Mondays. 3/12: Cannibal Ox; Scienz of Life. • 74 Leonard St. (212-219-3055). $.

Makor
Mondays in March: "What I Like About Jew Pays Tribute to the Songs of *Fiddler on the Roof*." 3/6: "Voices on the Verge." 3/7: John Wesley Harding. 3/9: "Café Del Mar Cultura." • 35 W. 67th St. (212-601-1000).

Maxwell's
3/7: Dexter Romweber. 3/10: Kyle Fischer. • 1039 Washington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).

Mercury Lounge
3/5: Over the Rhine. 3/6: Liars; Walkmen. 3/7: Scooters. 3/8: Uptown Sinclair; Realistics. 3/9: National. • 217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700).

S.O.B.'s
3/7: "Basement Bhangra" with D.J. Rehka. 3/8: E-Love. • 204 Varick St. (212-243-4940).

The Village Underground
3/8: Kevin Salem; Johnny Society. 3/9: NRBQ. • 130 W. 3rd St. (212-777-7745).

"Warsaw"
3/10: Bouncing Souls. • Polish National Home, 261 Driggs Ave., Brooklyn (toll free, 1-866-468-7619).

Clubs

APT
An apartment-themed lounge with a surprisingly good lineup of hip-hop, soul, and house D.J.'s. Mondays: Bobbito Garcia. Tuesdays: Jaymz Nylon. Wednesdays: *Fader* magazine presents Rich Medina. Thursdays: Small Change. Fridays: Ursula 1000. Saturdays: Chairman Mao and Citizen Kane. • 419 W. 13th St. (212-414-4245).

Baktun
Thursdays: The best deal in clubland: House great Tony Humphries for *free*. The first Friday of every month: Rotating house-music D.J.'s spin at "Confusion." Third Friday: Eclectic dance music with D.J. Wayne Pate at "Soularium." Fourth Friday: Icelandic promoters Hol-mar and A. Gram's super-cool "N'Ice." Saturdays: Drum and bass at "Direct Drive." Thursdays: Deep house with D.J. Jaymz Nylon. • 418 W. 14th St. (212-206-1590).

Centro-Fly
Thursdays: "Subliminal Sessions," with D.J. Erick Morillo and big-name special guests. Fridays: "GBH" hosts some of the more adventurous nights at the club with D.J.'s like Ashley Beedle and Marshall Jefferson. Saturdays: Energetic house and big beat with "Plant"; in the Pinky Room, Chez Music honcho Neil Aline hosts "We and the Music." Sundays: The Chelsea boys sweat out Saturdays toxins at "Drama at Large!" with D.J. Victor Calderone. • 45 W. 21st St. (212-627-7770).

★ Club Shelter
After nearly a decade at Vinyl, deep-house weekly "Shelter" has not only found a new home—it *is* the new home. The nightclub formerly known as Speed is now Club Shelter, the centerpiece of which will be D.J. Timmy Regisford's soulful, highly eclectic Saturday-night affair. So far unannounced is the remainder of the week's schedule, but no matter—after the club closings of 2001 and the terrorist attacks, New York nightlife desperately needs a dose of the party's good vibes. • Club Shelter, 20 W. 39th St (212-439-4141). $.

Groovejet
Mondays: Rock-and-roll classics, New Wave, and punk with D.J. Tommy. Tuesdays: D.J. Sean O'Shea spins deep house. Wednesdays: Techno upstart David Hollands. Thursdays: "Gallery" with D.J. Jackie Christie. Fridays: Drum and bass with "Globesonic." Saturdays: D.J.'s Kimyon, Rich Bourque, and Juan C spin techno and house at "Foundation." • 286 Spring St. (212-929-4780).

Luxx
Fridays: "Mutants" with D.J. Larry Tee. Saturdays: D.J. Larry Tee spins electroclash at "Berliniamsburg." Sundays: "House Music Sessions" with D.J. Raji K; D.J. Gomi. Mondays: "Cult Movie Mondays." Tuesdays: D.J. Miss Guy spins rock and metal at "Hell Bent for Brooklyn." • 256 Grand Street, Brooklyn (718-599-1000).

The Roxy
Saturdays: The Chelsea boys dance all night to a rotating set of house D.J.'s, including Razor of Razor and Guido. • 515 W. 18th St. (212-627-0404). $.

Shine
In March: Sundays: D.J. Rodney spins roots reggae at "Reminisce Reggae." Wednesdays: D.J.'s Nick Marc and Goodfinger spin everything from rock to electronica. The last Thursday of every month: "Giant Step Records Sessions" with D.J. Ron Trent spinning soulful house. Fridays: D.J.'s like Mark Ronson spin hip-

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Ground Rules In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start later than promised. Stars (★) indicate our editors' recommendations. $ = cash only.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW BUCHANAN/CAMERA PRESS/RETNA, LTD.

hop, reggae, and freestyle. Saturdays: D.J. Big Ben spins hip-hop at "The Show." • 285 W. Broadway (212-941-0900).

Spa
Wednesdays: Rock and roll spun by D.J.s like Paul Sevigny. Thursdays: A-listers and fashionistas take over with "Ultra" featuring hip-hop, house, and rock and roll spun by D.J.'s Mark Ronson, Lady Bunny, Cameron Douglas. Saturdays: Overdressed Euros line up for "Jet Set" with D.J. Eric LaPeau. • 76 E. 13th St. (212-388-1060).

The Mint
Fridays: "Spirit of Ibiza." Sundays: Promoter Derek Corley's hip-hop throw-down, which has already seen the likes of Suge Knight pass through its doors. In the Bass Mint: Mondays, drum and bass with Breakbeat Science D.J.'s DB and Dara. • 225 E. Houston St. (212-475-3200).

Vinyl
Fridays: "Be Yourself" with progressive-house maestro D.J. Danny Tenaglia. Sundays: François K, Joe Claussell, and Danny Krivit spin at the now-legendary afternoon party "Body & Soul." • 6 Hubert St. (212-343-1379).

Performance

Roll Over, Beethoven

He might have fronted one of pop's best surrealist bands since Captain Beefheart, but David Lowery hasn't lost his muse since leaving Camper Van Beethoven to start **Cracker** (pictured) in 1992. The group's recently released album *Forever*—which includes a very funny satire of rap-rock—maintains all the sly humor of Lowery's Beethoven days. The band plays Irving Plaza March 8. (See "Small Stages.")

Jazz

Birdland
In March: Sundays: Chico O'Farrill Afro-Cuban Jazz Big Band; Mondays, early: The Scott Whitfield Jazz Orchestra; Mondays, late: Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra featuring Lew Tabackin; Tuesdays, early: David Ostwald's Louis Armstrong Centennial Band; Tuesdays, late: Duke Ellington Orchestra directed by Paul Mercer Ellington; Fridays: Lew Anderson's All-American Big Band. 3/6: Bobby Sanabria and Ascension. 3/7–3/9: Lewis Nash Trio. • 315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080).

Blue Note
3/5–3/10: Willie Colon. • 131 W. 3rd St. (212-475-8592).

Iridium
Monday nights, the Les Paul Quartet holds office hours. 3/5–3/10: Cyrus Chesnut Quartet featuring Stefon Harris, Christian McBride, and Lewis Nash. Sets Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 and 10:30, with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. • 1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (212-582-2121).

★ "Highlights in Jazz" Presents: Billy Taylor's 80th Birthday Bash
3/7 at 8. With Billy Taylor Trio; Frank Wess and Benny Powell; Carol Sloane. • Pace Downtown Theater, 3 Spruce St. (212-346-1715). $22.50.

★ "Jazz Insights" Presents: "The Music of Duke Ellington"
Music and lecture series hosted by Arnold Jay Smith, Tuesdays from 7:45 to 9:30. 3/5: Eric Reed. • New School, 66 W. 12th St. (212-229-5690). $35.

Red Blazer
Mondays and Tuesdays: Sam Ulano's Jazz Band. Wednesdays: Felix Swing Band; Alan Russell Big Jazz Band. Thursdays: Stan Rubin's Big Swing Band. Fridays: Simon Wettenhall's Oceanic Dixieland Band. Saturdays: Bob Cantwell's Dixie & Swing Band. • 32 W. 37th St. (212-947-6428).

Rose Center
In March: Valerie Capers Ensemble. The Rose Center is open until 8:45 P.M. Suggested admission price is $10 for adults, $7.50 for students and seniors, $6 for children. Performances take place every Friday from 5:45 to 6:45 and 7:15 to 8:15. • Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100).

Small's
Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. • 183 W. 10th St. (212-929-7565).

Smoke
Sundays in March: Chris Washburne and Syotos. Mondays: Jam Session with John Farnsworth. Tuesdays: "Hammond B3 Organ Grooves." Wednesdays: Hot Pants Funk Sextet Plus One. Thursdays: Jim Rotondi and David Hazeltine's Electric Band. • 2751 Broadway, at 105th St. (212-864-6662).

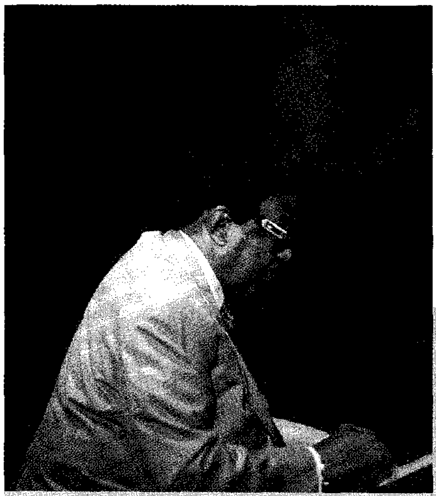
Tonic
Sundays: "Klezmer Sundays." 3/6: Yuka Honda with John Zorn, Dave Douglas, Russell Simins, Timo Ellis, and Rick Lee. 3/7: Mono plus White Out with Jim O'Rourke; Dr. Israel. 3/8: "Cine-Phonic": David Grubbs, Animal Collective, amd P.G. Six. 3/9: Susie Ibarra Quartet; Harriet Tubman; Sugarman Three. 3/10: Chris Corsano and Aaron Mullan; Joshua Burkett. 3/12: Chad Taylor, Jemeel Moondoc, and Tom Abbs; Bill Cole's Untempered Ensemble. • 107 Norfolk St. (212-358-7503). $.

Up Over Jazz Cafe
In March: Sundays: "Jazz in the Spirit: Afternoon of Gospel Jazz and Latin." Mondays: Jam session with Vincent Herring Quartet. Tuesdays: Vocal-instrumental jam session. Thursdays: Robert Glasper Trio. • Up Over Jazz Cafe, 351 Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn (718-398-5413).

Village Vanguard
Mondays in March: The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. 3/5–3/10: Roy Hargrove Quintet. • 178 Seventh Ave. So. (212-255-4037). $.

Performance

Charming Billy



Billy Taylor (pictured) is best known for his profiles of jazz musicians on CBS's *Sunday Morning*—a gig that has unfortunately obscured his role as one of jazz's premier pianists, equally at home with swing and mambo. On March 7, Taylor will be fêted on his 80th birthday by the "Highlights in Jazz" crew, including guitarist Russell Malone and trombonist Benny Powell. (See "Jazz.")

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club
Sundays in March: Downtown Comedy. Mondays in March: New Talent Showcase. • 82 W. 3rd St. (212-477-1000).

Carolines On Broadway
Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. $12.50–$24.50, two-drink minimum. 3/5: Mitch Fatel. 3/6: Monteria Ivy Benefit. 3/7–3/10: Kevin Pollak. 3/12: Otto and George. • 1626 Broadway (212-757-4100).

Comedy Cellar
Through 3/11: Colin Quinn; Kevin Brennan; Godfrey; Mitch Fatel; Robert Kelly. • 117 MacDougal St. (212-254-3480).

Cabaret

★ Algonquin Hotel
Through 3/9: Peter Cincotti. (Early shows Tues.–Sat., late shows Fri. and Sat.) • 59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800).

Arci's Place
3/6–3/9: Chris Calloway. 3/10: Jana Robbins. 3/11: Donna McKechnie. 3/12: Loni Ackerman. • 450 Park Ave. So. (212-532-4370).

Cafe Carlyle
Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band at 8:45. Through 3/23: David Campbell in "Back From Oz." • Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600).

Danny's Skylight Room
3/4–3/6: Charles Lindbergh. 3/7: Barbara Lowin. 3/8–3/9: Blossom Dearie. 3/10: Barbara Brussell and Ric Nasten. 3/11–3/12: Charles Lindbergh. Showtimes Friday at 7, Saturday at 7, and Sunday at 6:15. • 346 W. 46th St. (212-265-8130).

Judy's
3/6: Eric Pickering in "From Every Side." 3/7: Lynn Lobban with John Wallowitch. 3/8: Go Mahan. 3/9: Judy Kreston and David Lahm in "Medleyfin." 3/10: Anthony Gaglione in "I'm Alright." 3/11: Badomi de Cesare with David Brunetti. 3/12: Colm Reilly. • 169 Eighth Ave. (212-929-5410).

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TheMix

Edited by Boris Kachka

Radio Highlights

Studio 360: "Artist and Subject"
Kurt Andersen talks to performer Sarah Jones about the people she depicts in one-woman shows and discusses photographer Joel Meyerowitz's daily pictures of ground zero. • 3/9 at 10 A.M. WNYC, 820 AM and 93.9 FM.

"State of Mind: America 2002"
A special town-hall meeting, held February 7 at New York's Museum of Television & Radio and the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., is broadcast in this special edition of the radio show "The Infinite Mind." • 3/10, noon to 2 P.M. WNYC, 820 AM and 93.9 FM.

Lectures and Panels

"Who Is an Arab-American?"
Ralph Coury, a professor of Middle Eastern history, talks about the nature and varieties of Arab identity in the United States. • 3/6 at 6 P.M. Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672, ext. 257); free.

Jewish-Italian Writers
A round-table discussion titled "Jewish Identities, Jewish Writings" includes Italian journalist Elena Lowenthal and author André Aciman. • 3/6 at 6 P.M. NYU's Casa Italiana, 24 W. 12th St. (212-998-3862); free.

"Global Justice After September 11"
Senior officials from international organizations like Doctors Without Borders and the U.N. Development Program join reporter Elizabeth Neuffer to talk about their shifting post-9/11 priorities, with political philosopher Christian Barry moderating. • 3/6 at 6:30 P.M. Celeste Bartos Forum, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (212-930-0855); $10.

Charlotte Black Elk Speaks
The great-granddaughter of Nicholas Black Elk (whose story was told in the classic *Black Elk Speaks*) gives a lecture about the legacy of Wounded Knee. • 3/7 at 6 P.M. National Museum of the American Indian, 1 Bowling Green (212-514-3700); free.

"The Congo: A Witness to African History"
In conjunction with P.S. 1's African-art exhibit, visiting NYU professor Guy Martin and Stanford's Elisabeth Mudimbe-Boyi are among the panelists discussing the rise of Pan-Africanism, using the Congo's liberation as a starting point. • 3/7 at 7 P.M. NYU's Tishman Auditorium, 40 Washington Square So. (212-998-4222); free.

Martha Stewart
A favorite of neurotic Anglo-Saxons talks to *Business Week* editor-in-chief Stephen Shepard about her media megalith. • 3/7 at 8 P.M. The 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-415-5500); $22.

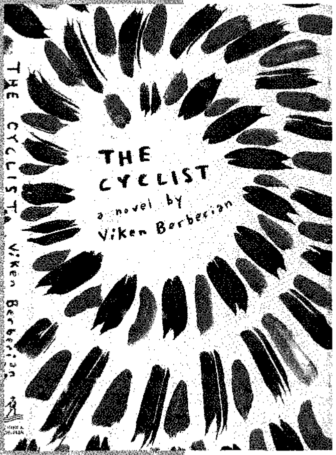
Preservation Conference
The Historic Districts Council's eighth annual gathering of preservation experts features Saturday talks like "New York's Lower East Side" and "Preserving the Modern Metropolis." Nine tours take place Sunday. • 3/8 through 3/11. Reception, 3/8 at 6 P.M. City Hall Restaurant, 131 Duane St. Conference: The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (212-614-9107); reception $20, conference $25, tours $12 to $15.

"Radical Islam and Terrorism on American Soil"
Steven Emerson—premier terrorism expert, producer of the documentary *Jihad in America*, and author, more recently, of *American Jihad: The Terrorists Living Among Us*—talks about the extensive and revealing work that's driven him into hiding. • 3/11 at 8:15 P.M. The 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-415-5500); $22.

In Print

Cycle of Violence

"It's chic to be a terrorism expert today; everyone seems to be recasting himself as one," says **Viken Berberian**, who finished his first novel, *The Cyclist* (Simon & Schuster; $22), before September 11. "But there is very little psychological material from the terrorist's point of view." Berberian, a former equities researcher and journalist, learned about the subject firsthand. When his family emigrated from war-torn Beirut to L.A. in 1975 (he was 9), they left behind his Armenian-nationalist father, who was killed by a terrorist from a rival political group eleven years later. "When I'm stuck in the particulars of an event, bound by my hypertrophied sense of tragedy," he says, "my natural tendency is to stop being aloof. But my favorite writers"—Camus, Rimbaud, Thomas Friedman—"are capable of transcending that. I think it's often that distance which separates a well-thought-out, critical work from a hurried and sentimental one. With this book," he adds, "I've exorcised my interest in political violence." *The Cyclist* is a nameless, bicycle-riding narrator's terse, dizzying account of his mission to blow up a Beirut hotel, a portrait that's both intimate and coldly cryptic. The half-Druze, half-Jewish terrorist is obsessed with food; rich Near Eastern flavors and scents suffuse the novel. Yet he has no name, no stated nationality, and no political or religious gripe. "It's important when we're talking about terrorism, especially in the Middle East, to talk in an abstract and universal language," Berberian says. "The alternative is to be caught up in regional politics and tribalism." Berberian appears at the University Club on March 6 with playwright Eric Bogosian and literary critic K. Tololyan. (See "The Written Word".) B.K.



The Written Word

Aryeh Lev Stollman
The author acclaimed for his first novel, *The Far Euphrates*, reads from his new book, *The Illuminated Soul*. • 3/5 at 7 P.M. The Corner Bookstore, 1313 Madison Ave., at 93rd St. (212-831-3554); free.

Todd Gitlin
The NYU media professor discusses and signs copies of his latest book, *Media Unlimited*. • 3/5 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Pl. (212-420-1322); free.

Adam Mansbach et al.
Q-Tip, Kelvin Sholar, and Robin Kelly help Mansbach discuss his jazz-infused novel, *Shackling Water*, and Mansbach reads in Brooklyn soon after. • Panel: 3/5 at 8 P.M. Center for Jazz Studies, Miller Theatre, Broadway at 116th St. (212-854-7799); $20. Reading: 3/7 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 267 Seventh Ave., Brooklyn (718-832-9066); free.

Viken Berberian et al.
The author reads from *The Cyclist*, with fellow Armenian-Americans Eric Bogosian and Wesleyan critic Khachig Tololyan speaking as well. Donations to the Children of Armenia fund are encouraged. • 3/6, reception at 6, reading at 7 P.M. University Club, 1 W. 54th St. (212-332-8541); free, jackets, no jeans.

George Pelecanos and S. J. Rozan
Mystery writer Pelecanos reads from his D.C. noir novel, *Hell to Pay*, while Rozan reads from *Winter and Night*. • 3/6 at 7 P.M. Partners & Crime, 44 Greenwich Ave. (212-243-0440); free.

Binnie Kirshenbaum
The author reads from her history-laden novel, *Hester Among the Ruins*. • 3/6 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-362-8835); free.

Miguel Algarin
The prolific writer and founder of the Nuyorican Poet's Café reads from new work. • 3/7 at 6 P.M. Brooklyn Public Library, Grand Army Plaza (718-230-2100); free.

David Mitchell
The author of *Ghostwritten* reads from his ambitious new novel, *Number9Dream*. • 3/7 at 7 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 1972 Broadway, at 65th St. (212-595-6859); free.

John Dufresne
The author reads from his novel *Deep in the Shade of Paradise*. • 3/7 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-362-8835); free.

Andy Behrman
Behrman reads from *Electroboy: A Memoir of Mania*. • 3/7 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Pl. (212-420-1322); free.

Neal Pollack, Sarah Vowell, Chip Kidd
Three hipsters join forces to promote their work—Pollack's *The Neal Pollack Anthology of American Literature*, Vowell's *Take the Cannoli*, and Kidd's *The Cheese Monkeys*. • 3/7 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 675 Sixth Ave., at 22nd St. (212-727-1227); free.

National Book Critics Circle Reading
More than a dozen finalists read their work on the eve of the awards. • 3/10 at 7 P.M. Tishman Auditorium, 40 Washington Sq. So. (212-463-6554); free.

Dawn Powell at the Algonquin
Such characters as Fran Lebowitz, Marian Seldes, and Michael Feingold read favorite passages out of the Library of America's recent Powell collection at the famous literary haunt. • 3/11 at 7 P.M. The Algonquin, 59 W. 44th St. (reservations required; 212-419-9331); free.

Michael Novacek
The paleontologist at the American Museum of Natural History talks about his memoir, *Time Traveler: In Search of Dinosaurs and Ancient Mammals From Montana to Mongolia*. • 3/11 at 7:30 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-362-8835); free.

Special Events

Tours

"Notorious Women of Washington Square"
Immigrants, radicals, scholars, artists, and antsy aristocrats all helped form the character of the Village neighborhood. See for yourself. • 3/10 at 1 P.M. Meet at the Washington Arch, Fifth Ave. at 8th St. (212-242-5762); $12.

Birth of the Beat Generation
New York counterculture owes as much to Morningside Heights as it does to downtown, as Bill Morgan, author of *The Beat Generation in New York*, demonstrates on a trip through the Columbia neighborhood, stopping at haunts frequented by Ginsberg, Cassady, Burroughs, and Kerouac. • 3/10 at 2 P.M. Call 212-415-5500 for reservations and meeting place; $20.

Benefits

JTS Awards Robert Morgenthau
This year, the Jewish Theological Seminary's Judge Simon Rifkind Award luncheon honors the Manhattan D.A. for his leadership. • 3/6 at noon. The Pierre Hotel, Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (212-678-8924); $500 and up.

Inwood House Spring Benefit
Proceeds from the gala dinner and dance party go to Inwood House, which shelters teen mothers and helps prevent pregnancy. • 3/6 at 6:30 P.M. The Essex House, 160 Central Pk. So. (212-861-4400, ext. 239); $300–$500.

"Oklahoma" Benefit
A family performance of the Broadway revival benefits the Randall's Island Sports Foundation, which aims to transform the island into a state-of-the-art mecca for youth sports and outdoor activities. • 3/9 at 2 P.M. The Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st ST. (212-830-7722); $150.

"Parties of Your Choice" Benefit
A grand gala benefiting the Women's Campaign Fund (and attended by notables like Chuck Schumer, Kim Cattrall, George Stephanopoulos, and *New York*'s own Caroline Miller) starts with cocktails before splitting off to seventeen dinner parties held in the private homes of the likes of David Halberstam and Barbara Corcoran. • 3/11, cocktails 6 to 7:30 P.M., dinner to follow. One 51 Restaurant, 151 E. 50th St. (800-446-8170); $350 and up.

Events

National Book Critics Circle Awards
The twenty-seventh annual awards presentation, honoring authors in five categories, is followed by a benefit reception and a chance to mingle with nominees Franzen, Whitehead, Milosz, et al., along with lifetime-achievement winner Joseph Epstein. • 3/11 at 6 P.M. NYU Law School, Tishman Auditorium, 40 Washington Sq. So.; reception at Greenberg Lounge across from auditorium (212-463-6554); ceremony free, reception $40.

Triple Pier Antiques Show
New York's largest antiques show goes into its second weekend with more than 600 different exhibits, with each pier holding a different category. • 3/9 and 3/10, hours vary by day and pier, all open between 11 A.M. and 5 P.M.; Passenger Terminal Piers 88, 90, and 92 on Twelfth Ave. bet. 48th and 55th Sts. (212-255-0020); $12.

Sports

The Big East Championship Tournament
In last year's championship game, Boston College completed its worst-to-first run by trouncing fifth-ranked finalist Pittsburgh. This year, Pittsburgh is the top-ranked team in the Big East and the eighth nationwide. Can it pull a Boston College this time? • 2/6 at noon, 2/7 at noon and 7 P.M., 2/8 at 7 P.M., 2/9 at 8 P.M.; Madison Square Garden, Seventh Ave. at 32nd St. (212-307-7171); $10–$59.50.

Brooklyn Half-Marathon
The first of five races in the NYRR Half-Marathon Grand Prix series goes from Coney Island to Prospect Park. • 3/9 at 8 A.M.; Coney Island Boardwalk, W. 5th St., Brooklyn (212-860-4455); preregistration $20, $14 members; race-day: $30, $20 members.

THOMAS *Continued from page 25*

ment savant, found himself in the middle of it.

With the pressure mounting from his clients to put some money to work, and Bowles lined up to carry the water, Forstmann plunged in. In September 1999, he invested a billion in McLeod. Bowles and the other partners had urged a more conservative $250 million stake. But Forstmann, all parties agree, overruled them.

"Forget about the 250—let's go for the entire billion," he said, according to one partner. "This is the kind of bold decision-making that makes me great."

Two other partners in the room deny that he made the boast. And in fact, the decision to take the whole deal may reflect something other than hubris on Forstmann's part: If his firm put in only $250 million, McLeod would raise the rest by issuing junk bonds, a means of financing that Forstmann has long detested.

In January 2000, Forstmann Little put in the first $850 million of what would soon become a $1.9 billion investment in XO Communications, a provider of broadband and other phone services.

Stranger still was the firm's $60 million investment, in October 1999, in Intelisys (which became Metiom). At the time, the company was little more than an in-house software company incubated by Chase Manhattan. It aimed to develop software to feed the then booming business-to-business procurement market on the Internet. B2B, in the parlance of the time, was the hot investment theme. And since Bowles was a prep-school classmate of fellow North Carolinian and Chase CEO William Harrison, it was natural that Intelisys go first to Forstmann Little.

While Bowles was a board member of McLeod, tiny little Metiom, over which he presided as board chairman, was the company that absorbed the vast bulk of his time. For over a year, Bowles logged hundreds of hours trying vainly to use his comprehensive Rolodex to bring the company business.

It was an odd pairing. Bowles's $4.28 million salary at Forstmann Little was not far from Metiom's entire revenue. Forstmann had employed a similar strategy when he had recruited Donald Rumsfeld to whip his bedraggled General Instrument into shape in the early nineties. And Bowles did try to make some rain.

Forstmann Little wanted to build out the company aggressively. By mid-2000, the staff had ballooned to 380, with 40 full-time marketers and a sales force of more than 100—not to mention rooms full of consultants from Accenture and KPMG. "The questions from the Forstmann Little guys were *How many people have you hired? How many consultants do you have?*" remembers one senior financial executive. "They were always putting pressure on us, always asking us, *How big are you growing?*"

Strangely enough for a company with a burn rate that peaked at $10 million a month, for much of 2000, Metiom had no permanent CFO. Unable to find one, Bowles brought in Jason Goldberg, a twentysomething former special assistant to him during his White House days, to cut deals, and his son, Sam, to work with the comptroller and monitor expenses.

But the business didn't click, despite Bowles's efforts to tout the company's software with letters to CEOs at Ford, DaimlerChrysler, and First Union. Still the company's revenues remained more a trickle than a stream.

In the fall of 2000, the company moved into its luxury Silicon Alley offices at a cost of about $13 million.

At the same time, Bowles and the board decided to spend $1 million to change the company's name from Intelisys to Metiom—supposedly a fusion of the words *meteor* and *medium*. Or, as the joke around the office went, *meeting* and *tedium*.

There was even talk of an IPO, with Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley valuing Metiom as high as $1.2 billion.

By February 2001, though, financing for Internet stocks had disappeared and Metiom continued to miss its targets. Abruptly, Bowles and his Forstmann Little partners pulled the plug on the company. In May, Metiom filed for bankruptcy.

In October, Bowles quietly resigned from Forstmann Little as well as from his affiliated board seats to focus on his run for the Senate in North Carolina. He had come to Forstmann Little with high hopes. He was supposed to institutionalize the harried little partnership as well as grow it. Instead, he found himself spending untold hours and amounts of political capital trying to salvage perhaps the most dubious of all Forstmann Little's tech investments.

"I don't think Forstmann Little ever understood that this was not an Internet company," says a Metiom alum. "What we really needed was financial governance. If you give money to a kid, he will buy a car and crash it into a tree. That's what we did."

Did Teddy Forstmann take his eye off the ball? Perhaps not: His three tech investments in 2001 carry the hallmarks of the investing style that made his name. Big, bold sums coupled with with big, bold names. It's just that this time, he was following the pack instead of leading it. ■

E-mail: lthomas122@nyc.rr.com; Landon Thomas Jr.'s columns can be read at nymetro.com/archive/thomas.

Solutions to last week's puzzles

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cue

Edited by Susan Avery

Children's Events

If You Rebuild It . . .
Rebuilding New York now means something for the kids. The Long Island Children's Museum has moved and reopened in a former airplane hangar at Mitchel Field. Asphalt Green reopens the main building, the Murphy Center. (See box.) • Long Island Children's Museum, Mitchel Center, 11 Davis Ave., Garden City (516-222-0207 or www.licm.org); $8. Asphalt Green's Murphy's Fun Day, 3/10 from noon to 4 P.M.; 555 E. 90th St. (212-369-8890 or www.asphaltgreen.org); free.

Ice, Ice Babies
As a prelude to the upcoming digitally animated film *Ice Age*, which opens on 3/15, the Children's Museum of Manhattan is hosting artists from Blue Sky Studios to show kids how it's all done. The youngest ones will work with frozen paint and collage materials. Older kids will learn about storyboarding, claymation, media production, and weather reporting. • 3/9–3/10; Children's Museum of Manhattan, 212 W. 83rd St. (212-721-1234 or www.cmom.org); $6.

Bringing Back the Downtown, Kid-style
Row by row, kids will make the gardens bloom at Battery Park City's Rockefeller Park. Second- through fifth-graders will learn botany, biology, and agronomy (the science of soil management) through hands-on lessons about planting, cultivating, and harvesting. Registration required. • Tuesdays through 4/30; 3:45 to 5:30 P.M.; Children's Garden at Rockefeller Park, Battery Park City (212-267-9700, ext. 348); free.

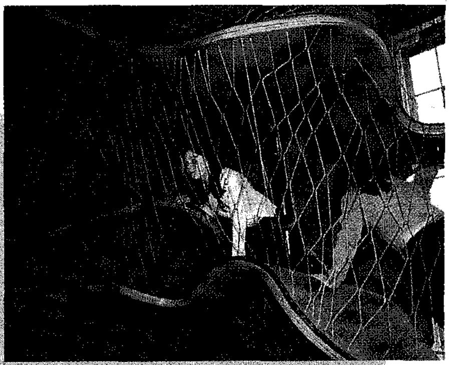
Sap to Syrup
Leave from Queens and spend a day at the scenic Taconic Outdoor Education Center for a sugar-maple celebration. Participate in hay rides and hands-on demos of tapping trees, boiling sap, and producing syrup. Pancake breakfast also available. Pre-registration required. Space is limited. • 3/10 from 8:30 A.M. to 5 P.M.; Alley Pond Environmental Center, 228-06 Northern Blvd., Douglaston (718-229-4000); $50 for grown-ups, $45 for seniors and kids 11 and younger.

A Primary *Peter*
The winter series of the Little Orchestra Society concludes with Prokofiev's timeless symphonic fairy tale *Peter and the Wolf*. Conducted by Dino Anagnost, the 50-minute concert features colorful characters with interesting props and costuming. • 3/9 at 10:30 A.M. and noon; 3/10 at 9:30 A.M., 11 A.M., 1 P.M., and 2:30 P.M.; Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (212-971-9500); $40.

It's Different From All Other Workshops
At the 92nd St. Y's annual Passover Family Workshop, kids make their own Seder plates, matzo covers, and the all-important Elijah's cup. They'll also mix charoset, taste maror, hear the story of the Hebrews' freedom from slavery, and learn the answers to the Four Questions. For kids grades K through 4. • 3/10 from 2 to 4 P.M.; 92 St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-415-5500 or www.92ndsty.org); $20 per family of one grown-up and one kid, $10 each additional person.

Heads Up
Phrenology, the study of the skull's surface to determine personality traits, was a fad of the nineteenth century. Join a modern-day practitioner as he reads the heads of famous men in American history through the use of the death-mask collection at the New-York Historical Society. Then let him have a go at yours. • 3/9 from 11 to 12:30 P.M.; New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400 or www.nyhistory.org); $5 grown-ups, $3 seniors and kids, free to kids 11 and younger.

Circus of the Stars
Do we smell spring? Perhaps it's just the elephants heading through the Midtown Tunnel. Either way, the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is back. This year's show, the 132nd season, highlights three bold women: Sara, the Tiger Whisperer; trapeze siren Sylvia Zerbini; and Mei Ling, the hand-balancing motorcycle maiden. Clowns and other displays of derring-do are also on tap. • 3/6–3/10 at Continental Airlines Arena; 3/12–3/18 at Nassau Coliseum; 3/21–4/7 at Madison Square Garden (212-307-7171 or www.ringling.com); $12.50–$45.50.



Happenings

Play's the Thing

What started out as a bunch of upper-crust Long Islanders' bragging about the children's museums their families visited around the world turned into a challenge. In 1989, North Shore attorney Robert Lemle and his dinner buddies realized that Long Island had no such institution. Four years and a half-million dollars in fund-raising later, the **Long Island Children's Museum** opened its doors in Garden City. The teeny space housed a handful of exhibits, yet from day one lines were around the block. Clearly, phase two needed to begin—and this week LICM reopens, eight times larger and with a dozen exhibits (pictured, ClimbIt), a 150-seat theater, three studios, and plenty of parking. Back on this side of the East River, **Asphalt Green**'s landmark Murphy Center has just completed a $9 million renovation that upgraded the facility with air-conditioning, better lighting, wheelchair access, and an additional 3,200 square feet, including a new puppet playhouse, fitness equipment, and basketball courts. March 10 is the grand opening, a.k.a. the free Murphy's Fun Day festival, with clowns, crafts, storytelling, and gymnastics. "I like to think of Asphalt Green as New Yorkers' backyard," says director Jean Harris. "We want people to come to our house to play." (See "Children's Events.") S.A

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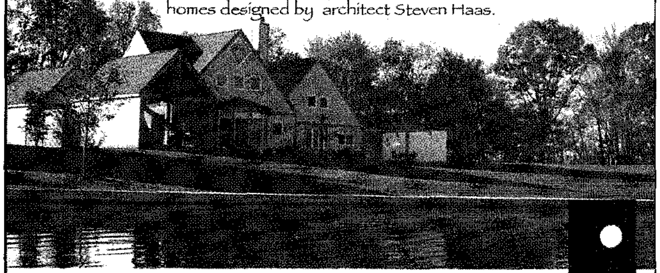

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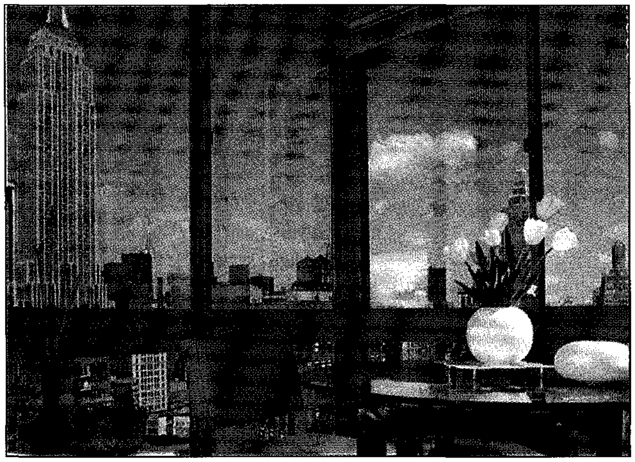

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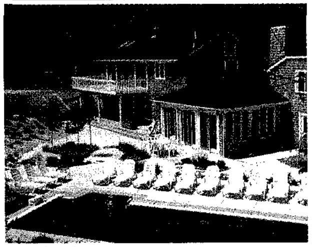

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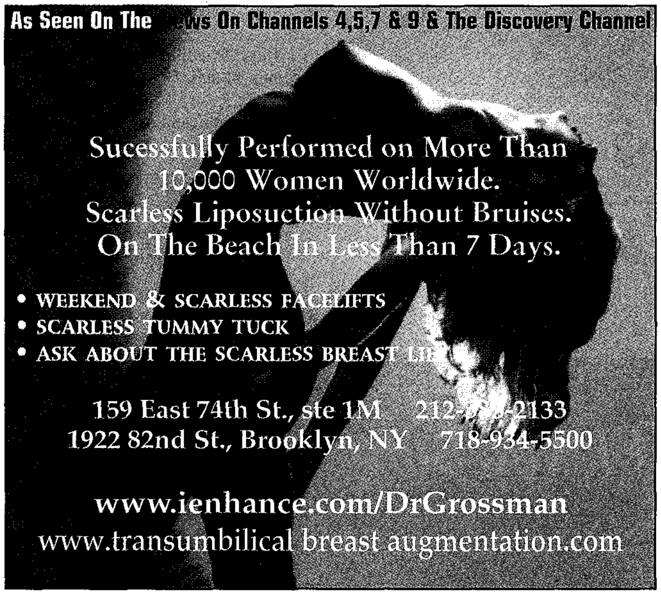
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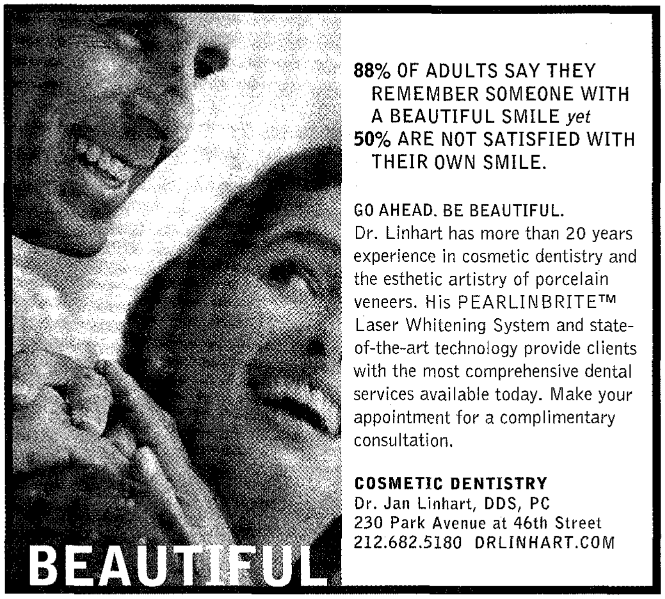

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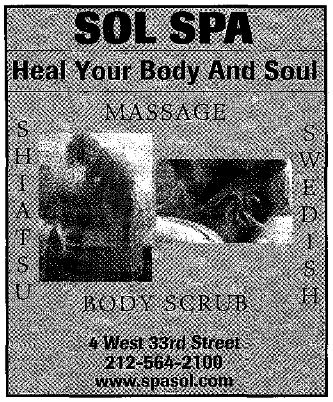

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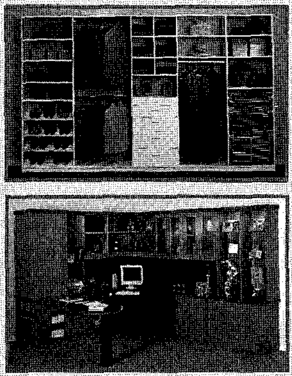

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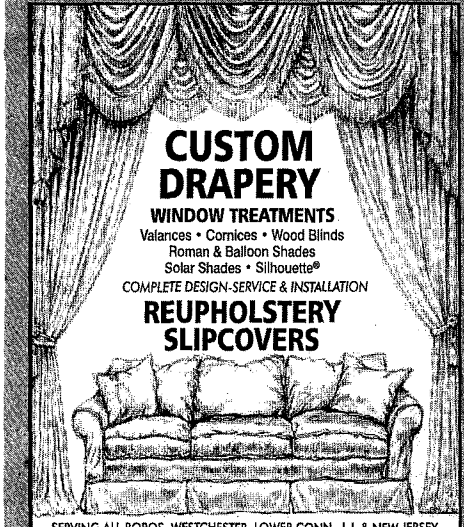

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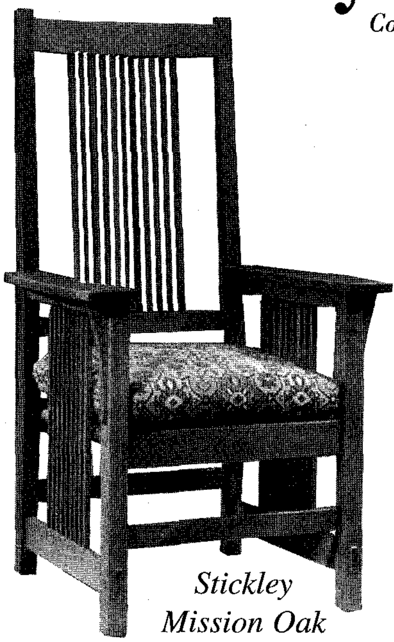

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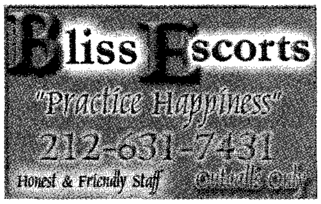
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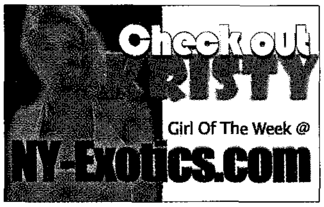
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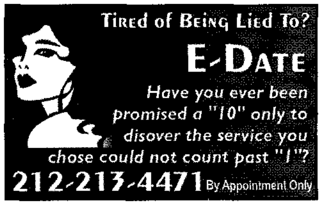
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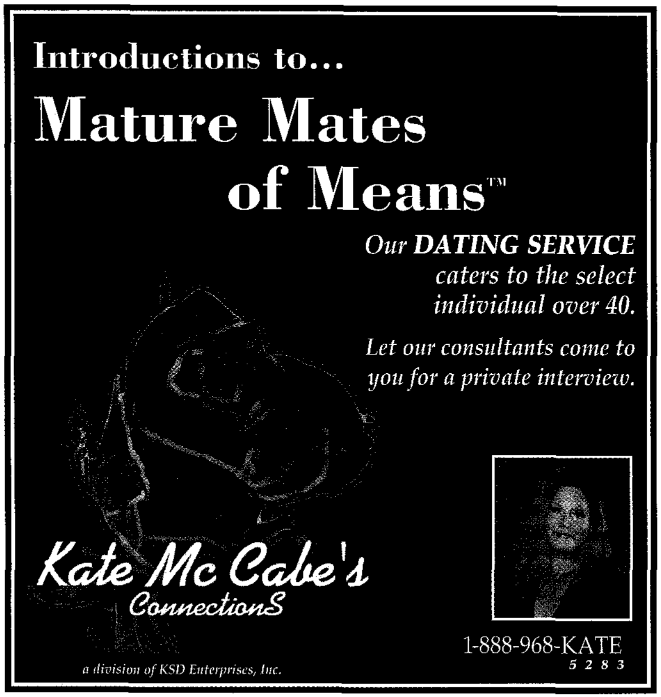
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Exotic Physician—36, East meets West, good-looking, South Asian, warm, sincere, active, into arts, seeks beautiful, outgoing professional woman. 2036 ✉☎

Male, 47—Sensitive, intelligent, emotionally in-touch, communicative, great sense of humor - seeks a woman with similar qualities. 1991 ✉☎

Seeks Soul Mate—Divorced Jewish male, 62, affectionate, caring, good-looking, physician, seeks woman in 50s, for fun, loving and lasting relationship. Photo/ phone/ note, please. 2014 ✉☎

No Games, No Guile—51, Jewish woman, smart, successful, friendly, interested in Israel, music, theater, the news and hanging with friends. Looking for someone strong, smart, interesting and emotionally together. 2004 ✉

Professional Man, Low-Key—Slender, 60s, Jewish, seeks Jersey lady, 40s-50s, who's mentally and physically very strong, tall/very tall, robust. 1968 ✉☎

I'm Waiting For You—Stylish, beautiful, fun-loving, cultured, successful lady seeking sophisticated man, 57-69, to travel, socialize and share a comfortable lifestyle. Note and photo a must. 2024 ✉☎

Warm Italian Widow—Small business owner seeks Italian or Jewish man, 65-75, financially independent, caring, fun and interested in a quality relationship. 2006✉

Tall Jewish Art Director—Handsome and fit, 52, seeks sensitive, attractive lady soul mate, 45ish, for lasting relationship. Photo, please. 1988 ✉☎

Pretty Blond—Vivacious, great figure, sincere, down-to-earth, young 50s, looking for that special guy - tall, Manhattan business or professional, 58-68. 2010✉☎

Sweet Brunette—Professional seeks Jewish professional male, 50s. 2019✉☎

Attractive Teacher—Widow, Jewish, sincere, loyal, sense of humor, loves animals. Seeks a good man for the long run, 60 plus. Photo. 1977 ✉☎

Attractive, Outgoing, Bright—Manhattan female, 37, 5'6", slim, educated, successful career, seeks confident, established NYC male under 45, who enjoys life and living in NYC. Note/photo. 2007 ✉

Warm, Pretty, Tall—46, Jewish, LI professional, mom of one. Seeks upbeat single dad. leslie235@aol.com 1967 ✉☎

Loving Widow—Educated, witty, very pretty, needs a cultured, loving, educated man, 70-80 plus - one who enjoys the warmth and closeness of a soul mate. Exchange of photos and phone (near White Plains). 2026 ✉

Former Fashion Model—Well-traveled, well-informed, cultured, Jamiacan-born, black, 5'9", slim, divorced, seeks a tall man of substance, 55-65, for togetherness. E-mail: nerbax@hotmail.com 2034 ✉☎

Petite Chinese Lady—50, look 39, smart, pretty, buxom. Seek upscale white male friend, marriage. No games. 1995✉☎

Attractive Gay Female—40, feminine, very spiritual, sensual, open, loving, conscious, soft, gentle, compassionate and very stable. Loves to ski, swim, travel, bike, beach, the city...and lives fully. Seeks the same for long-term relationship. Photo/note/number appreciated. 1982✉☎

Are You Mr. Romantic?—Attractive, sincere woman looking for 55-60, classy man who enjoys travel, fine dining and the best life has to offer. 2008 ✉

Lovable Mensch Wanted—For forever togetherness by slim, pretty, young 60, nurturer. You: successful, caring, fit, stable, humorous, enjoys nice lifestyle. Me: vibrant, classy, educated professional. Fort Lee area. 2021 ✉☎

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Manhattan Widow—Jewish (not religious), affluent, looking for joy with affluent widower over 70, who is successful, educated, smart, with wide interests and a sense of humor, to share happy times. 2028 ✉

Crew Wanted—Divorced, Jewish male, 55, secure MD, sailor wishes younger, attractive Jewish female as co-captain or first mate for sailing and other adventures. Photo please. 1986 ✉☎

Attractive Bachelor—Mid 60s, retired guidance counselor with good communication skills and various interests. Seeking a woman, 50-65, for friendship, companionship and possible romance. Phone number appreciated. 2000 ✉

Girl Golfer—35, seeks low-handicap, ready golfer for 90 rounds a year - with equal time at the 19th hole. Strokes given for humor, smoking, good looks, country club membership. 1990 ✉☎

Pretty, Prep-Schooled Sweetie—Shapely, down-to-earth, divorced Jewish female, 49, petite, with Master's degree. Enjoys golf, tennis, show tunes, cooking, cuddling, the beach and nurturing a relationship. Seeking a Jewish male, kind-hearted, patient, emotionally available and ready for a loving, loyal life together. Letter/photo/phone, please. 2025 ✉☎

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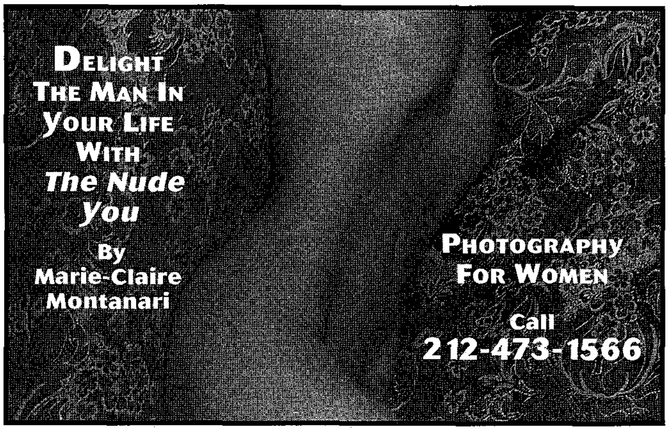

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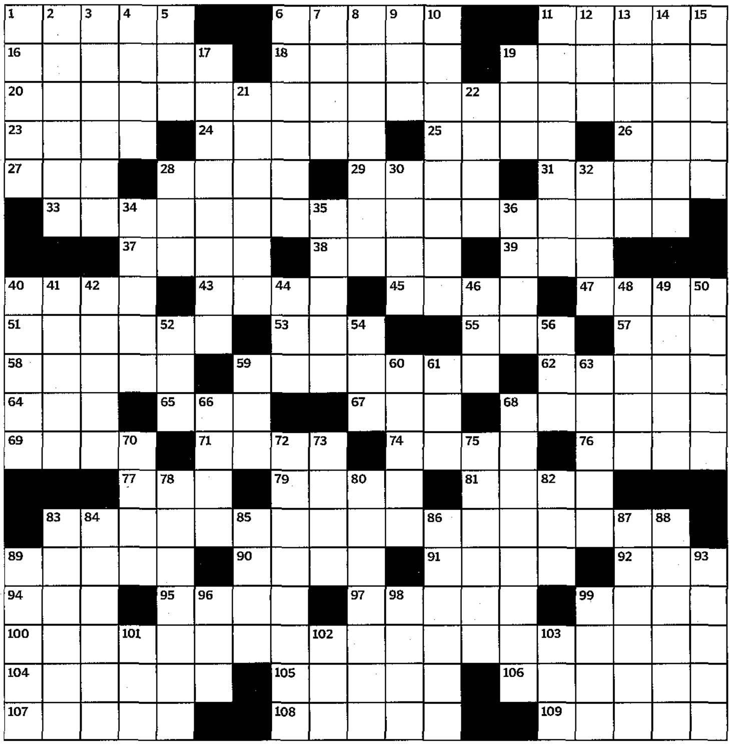
'Film Extras'

'Cue' Crossword by Maura B. Jacobson



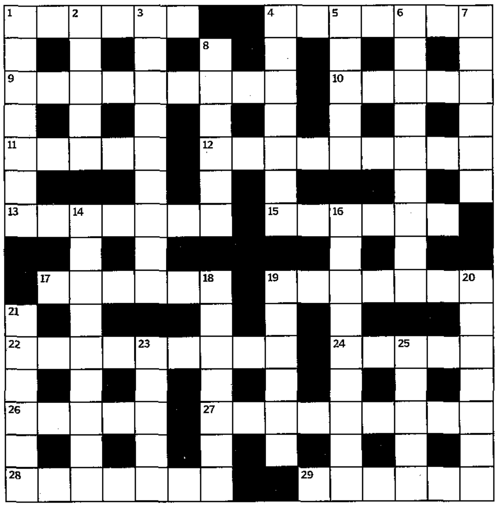
ACROSS

1 Roles
6 Varnish ingredient
11 Light-bulb units
16 Baking potatoes
18 Coeur d'——
19 Grape distillery
20 Film starring Sonny Bonzo?
23 Opposed, hillbilly style
24 "—— Want to Set the World on Fire"
25 Laura of "Jurassic Park"
26 Tattered remnant
27 Sibling nickname
28 Washer cycle
29 Far from hungry
31 Stratosphere layer
33 Film written by Toad Mosel?
37 Santa's laugh
38 Greek army deity
39 Mentalism, for short
40 Picasso period
43 Drunken revel
45 "The Thin Man" pooch
47 Openhanded blow
51 Make less dense
53 Affirmatif
55 Dinner leftover
57 Pamplona cheer
58 Geometry corner
59 Film starring Better Midler?
62 Academy Award
64 Polar abundance
65 Branch of Buddhism
67 Former Brit. coin
68 New Jersey international airport
69 Rolltop, for one
71 Octagonal road sign
74 Turkish liqueur
76 Trees in an O'Neill title
77 "Unforgettable" Cole
79 Damone and Morrow
81 Important Khan
83 Film starring Army Irving?
89 Comes in third at the racetrack
90 Many a Muslim
91 Past due
92 Decay
94 Hockey All-Star of the '70s
95 Heron's kin
97 —— lunch (door sign)
99 Playtime activity
100 Film directed by Busboy Berkeley?
104 —— million
105 Pond growths
106 Floating hotels
107 Portions out
108 Bird's name in "Peter and the Wolf"
109 En ——

DOWN

1 Middle East breads
2 Faster than largo
3 Jaunty
4 At that time
5 AA candidate
6 Indian heroine of a Helen Hunt Jackson novel
7 College town of North Carolina
8 Summoned
9 Pen dip
10 Unnecessary
11 Separates the chaff
12 Ampersand
13 Bin Laden teaching
14 AWOL student
15 "Riders to the Sea" dramatist
17 Ocean greeting
19 Tolstoy topic
21 Reporter's boss
22 Give a shout
28 "—— 'nuff!"
30 Layer of the iris
32 Blasts with a ray gun
34 Round and round it goes
35 One-handed backboard shot
36 Time between birthdays
40 Pigtail
41 Bengal soldier's weapon
42 Advocates strongly
44 Guck
46 Member of the sandbox set
48 All-stations train
49 Shock clock
50 Extra job-benefits
52 City of Morocco
54 The "I" in T.G.I.F.
56 Ballerina's prop
59 Explosive stuff
60 Half a centaur
61 Wife of Mickey, Frank, and Artie
63 It goes with blood, toil, and tears
66 Ferrara ruling house, once
68 Not an early bird
70 Was acquainted with
72 Abroad
73 —— colada
75 Black-belt art
78 Allots tasks
80 Sci-fi bionic humans
82 Put some speed on
83 Seat of power
84 Famed WW II aircraft carrier
85 Self-admiring
86 Tennis great Gibson
87 Packing boxes
88 Baseball thrills
89 Gomorrah's partner
93 Succinct
96 Squeezing snake
98 Beehive State
99 Sophia's compatriot
101 Haberdashery buy
102 West of Ga.
103 Target-practice order

The 'Guardian' Crossword Set by Paul



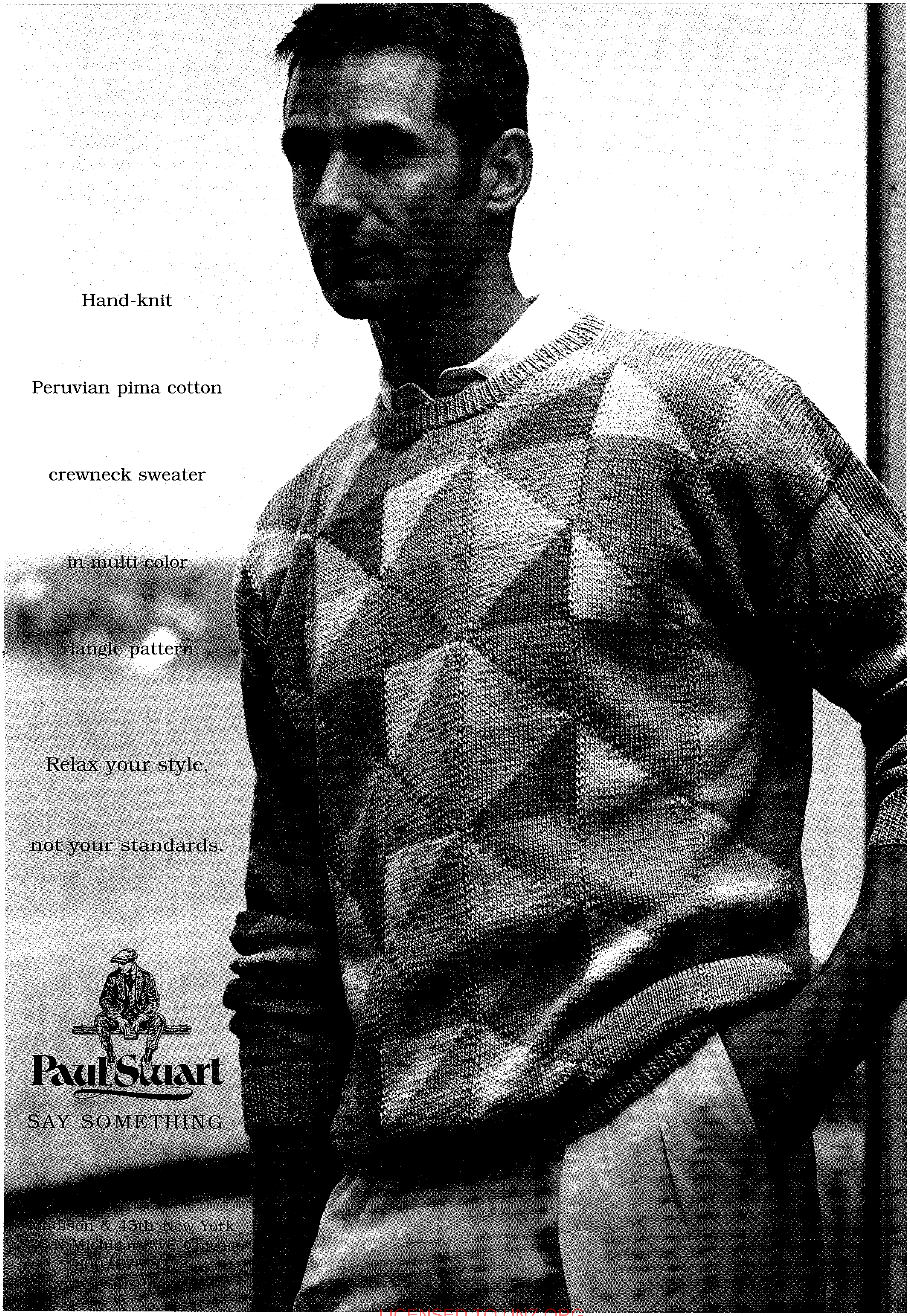
ACROSS

1 Settled with fuddy-duddy. (6)
4 Gestapo's awful stamp duty? (7)
9 Old lover asks for informal greeting—put teeth in or shower? (9)
10 Prepare lips to kiss prize money. (5)
11,22, 19dn,20 Frantic cheese trio, until tailed, when bled (rhyme). (5,5,4,3,3,4,3)
12 See 2.
13 Sailor's back on track to climb on his ship? (7)
15 See 14.
17 Game level in seconds. (6)
19 Render vulnerable to maths, perhaps. (7)
22 See 11.
24 Break head off. (5)
26 Fragrant resin in a twist of lime, lemon etc. (5)
27 While that woman grips gammy boil, one cuts it out. (9)
28 Lustrous material brings cheese and cheese content face to face. (7)
29 Pacific organisation is working for agreement. (6)

DOWN

1 Quarter weight in boxing, or wrestle perhaps when you can't stand the heat. (7)
2,12 Ancient King chopped the prune with battle-axe. (5,9)
3 Regret accepting bribes, tortured, so treat for stretching. (9)
4 The Queen's back in knickers, as she and Philip have been now for over 50 years. (7)
5 Great seeing change in 10. (5)
6 With an élite car, can ego spread to conceit? (9)
7 Twelve nations enter next, when crushed they leave the stage. (6)
8 Raw material is fixed by gun. (6)
14,15 Savage forest night ripe for ballet. (3,4,2,6)
16 Film about black warrior's mutiny. (9)
18 Praise a blossoming meadowsweet. (7)
19,20 See 11.
21 Oppose article. (6)
23 Control ambition. (6)
25 Musketeer has to cut up. (5)

SOLUTIONS TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLES APPEAR ON PAGE 124; FOR A PEEK AT THIS WEEK'S ANSWERS, VISIT NYMETRO.COM/NYM/PUZZLE.

Hand-knit

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